

Army arrests 100 in sweep of Baalbek

BAALBEK (AFP) — Lebanese soldiers arrested around 100 people in a series of raids in the eastern Baalbek region following a vast anti-government protest there, security officials said Saturday. Soldiers later released 90 of those arrested late Friday in four villages in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley, they said. The sweep came after 10,000 people attended a "Revolution of the Hungry" rally in Baalbek earlier Friday as part of a civil disobedience campaign mounted by a leader of the radical wing of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah. Sheikh Subhi Tofaili called on Lebanon's poor to march on Beirut during the protest, which was surrounded by a heavy deployment of soldiers and police. Interior Minister Michel Murr said the raids were aimed only to make use of the large number of security forces in the region.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية للرأي

Egypt, U.S. to discuss free trade agreement

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt and the United States will discuss a free trade agreement on Monday when a joint economic committee meets. Supply Minister Ahmed Gowell said in remarks published Saturday. Mr. Gowell, quoted by the government daily Al-Ahram, said "the aim of this free trade zone is to consolidate economic and trade relations between the two countries." He said it would involve "the freeing up of trade between Egypt and the United States, which means the review of customs duties on products from the two countries." Mr. Gowell is to attend the five-day meeting of the Egyptian-U.S. Economic Partnership Committee in the United States from Monday. The United States is Egypt's main trading partner. Last year Egypt imported \$3.14 billion of goods from the United States and exported \$664.8 million.

Volume 22 Number 6575

AMMAN SUNDAY, JULY 6, 1997, SAFAR 29, 1418

Price: Jordan 200 Fils

PNA calls for Arab summit over settlements

RAMALLAH (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) called Saturday for an Arab summit to oppose Israel's settlement policies and salvage the Middle East peace process. The self-rule cabinet, after a meeting in Ramallah, issued a statement calling for a summit to confront what it called Israeli threats to "Jerusalem and the peace process." It also called for an international conference on the same theme with the participation of the United States and the European Union. The Palestinian leadership blamed the stalemate in the peace process on Israel, saying the "continuation of the Judaization of Jerusalem and Israeli settlement building makes the situation explosive."

State of emergency to be lifted in Algeria

ALGIERS (AP) — In a sign that Algeria's bloody Muslim insurgency is easing, the country's five-year-old state of emergency will end this Saturday, a newspaper reported Thursday. The independent French daily L'Autorité, considered close to the government, said President Liamine Zerkou will lift the emergency decree during a speech on Algerian Independence Day. The announcement comes in the wake of promises by the new government to end violence that has killed more than 60,000 people.

Police shoot dead three militants in Egypt

MINYA (AFP) — Egyptian police shot dead three Islamist militants hiding in a village in the southern province of Minya, the Interior Ministry said Saturday. Police tracked the militants down to a house in Hur village 300 kilometres south of Cairo late Friday and were trying to arrest them when they opened fire, a ministry statement said. The police returned fire. When the shots died down, police discovered the bodies of the three militants in the hideout, it said. Two policemen were wounded in the gun battle, one seriously. It added, "Automatic rifles, pistols, ammunition and documents on a terrorist organisation were discovered in the hideout, it said. Islamist militants launched a violent campaign to overthrow Egypt's secular government in March 1992, since then 1,184 people have been killed.

Israeli radio station bans female singers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli public radio station has banned songs by female artists, provoking a row between secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews. Managers of Kol Ha' (The Voice of Life) broke in to a song by a man and a woman without warning this week and pulled it off air, claiming such music is "ungodly." Two of the radio station's star presenters resigned in protest Friday, complaining that the station originally aimed at a broad public had been hijacked by ultra-Orthodox Jews whose interpretation of Jewish law is much more strict. The row is to be discussed by the board of Israel's second television station, the parent company of the public radio station which broadcasts in Jerusalem.

Jewish settlers goad Arabs in Hebron; Palestinian shot

HEBRON (AFP) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded a Palestinian stone-thrower in Hebron on Saturday as Jewish settlers goaded protesters with anti-Muslim chants.

The Palestinian was shot when Israeli troops guarding Jewish enclaves in the heart of the town opened fire on demonstrators hurling rocks at them, witnesses said.

Jewish settlers, meanwhile, gathered behind the soldiers chanting "the Prophet Muhammad is a pig," the witnesses said.

The latest upsurge in violence in Hebron was sparked by a poster depicting the Muslim prophet as a pig, considered filthy by both Jews and Muslims, which was stuck onto Arab shops in the town by an Israeli extremist a week ago.

Some 400 militant Jewish settlers live among 120,000 Palestinians in Hebron, which contains sites holy to both Jews and Muslims and has long been

a flashpoint of violence between the two peoples.

Three weeks of clashes in the divided town over the stalemate in the peace process has left more than 220 Palestinians wounded. Eighteen Israeli soldiers have been injured, one seriously by a pipe-bomb.

Israel has pinned the blame for the violence on the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and its police force, and warned that it take tougher action against protesters unless Palestinian police intervene.

But a Palestinian police chief rejected Israel's warnings of a shoot-to-kill policy and demands for intervention on Saturday.

General Jibril Rajoub, head of Palestinian Preventive Security on the West Bank, said: "The threats of death do not impress us and have no political effect."

"We are not there to obey Israeli dictates and implement the policy of Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu aimed at sinking the peace process," he told Israeli army radio.

Asked about Mr. Netanyahu's accusations that police are violating the January Hebron accord if they fail to intervene, General Rajoub insisted Israel must first respect its own commitments under the agreement.

The accord, which handed 80 per cent of Hebron over to Palestinian self-rule, calls on the Israeli army and Palestinian police to prevent violence or terrorism.

The commander of Israeli forces in the West Bank, General Gabi Ofir, warned Friday that his soldiers would shoot to kill to put a lid on the protests.

"Those who throw explosive devices to kill must understand that they will die, because those are the shooting orders," he said.

The general called on the PNA to intervene to restore calm. "If not, the price could be heavy."

Jerusalem mayor says peace deadlock could benefit Israel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Jerusalem's Israeli mayor, Ehud Olmert, said on Saturday he believed the prolonged freeze in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process could benefit Israel.

"It turns out that the impasse in the peace process has not been to our disadvantage. It could even be profitable if we resist pressures (against Israeli policies)," the right-wing mayor told Israel Radio.

Mr. Olmert, a member of

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party, played down the risk of a Palestinian uprising if the nearly four-month deadlock continues, saying Israel could find "adequate responses" to such a revolt.

Violence has flared frequently in the occupied territories since the Palestinians walked away from the negotiating table in mid-March in protest at the start of construction on a new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem.

"What's happening today was predictable. We are at the heart of a battle which renounce all the territories" of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem in the 1967 war. Mr. Olmert was one of the main proponents of the controversial 6,500 unit Jewish settlement on the outskirts of Arab east Jerusalem.

Egypt's president says no reason for beef scare

CAIRO (R) — President Hosni Mubarak said in remarks published on Saturday that authorities have taken steps to ensure that Egypt is free of beef infected with mad cow disease.

The statement in Al-Jumhuriyah newspaper said that the Egyptian authorities had discovered an attempt to ship British beef into Egypt using Belgian documents.

"There is no meat in the Egyptian market with mad cow disease," the president's statement said.

Egypt on Friday published an order in newspapers banning the import of beef from Belgium after a European Commission

Egypt seizes Belgian beef

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian authorities said Saturday they have seized 600 tonnes of beef imported from Belgium following a scare over "mad cow" disease. Around 2,000 tonnes of beef has been imported from Belgium in the first six months of the year. But only 600 tonnes had not yet been distributed, police said. Egyptian trade minister, Ahmad Gowell, ordered a ban on beef from Belgium and a tightening up of checks on imported meat in general.

report that 1,600 tonnes of British beef had been exported, with Belgian help, to the Netherlands. Russia and Egypt despite a ban imposed because of the mad cow crisis.

The Ministry of Supply and Trade order was effective immediately in response to the commission announcement. The commission said on

Thursday that the beef had been exported illegally. Chief spokesman, Nikolaus van Der Pas, said the beef was "fraudulently declared to be of Belgian origin."

He said 700 tonnes had been seized by Dutch authorities and the remaining 900 tonnes had probably been exported to Russia and Egypt.

Iraq, U.N. finalise oil-for-food deal

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A U.N. coordinator said here Saturday that his agency had completed its part of a plan to distribute food and humanitarian supplies in Iraq and was waiting for Iraqi officials to complete their work.

"Our part of the job is done," said the U.N. coordinator of humanitarian affairs, Staffan de Mistura, referring to the oil-for-food deal with Iraq. "The ball is now in the court of Iraq."

Mr. Mistura said his team had completed a plan for the distribution of food and supplies to Kurdish-controlled areas in northern Iraq and that it was up to Iraqi offi-

cials to submit a plan for delivery in rest of the country.

Both plans would be folded together and then submitted to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan for final approval, he added.

"We don't see any reason why the distribution plan should not be finished within a week, having done most of the job," Mr. Mistura said. He was told by Iraqi officials that their plan was complete but he has yet to see it.

Iraq announced in June that it would suspend implementation of the oil-for-food deal — an easing of U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq

after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait — until a new distribution plan was done.

Baghdad has complained that the implementation of the deal has dragged on for too long as U.N. coordinators worked to assure that the food and medicines would reach the Kurds and other ethnic minorities in Iraq.

Because of the delays, Iraqi authorities announced that they would be reducing rations in July for basic food items such as rice. According to the U.N., 850,000 tonnes of goods have been delivered to Iraq since March under the humanitarian deal.

Arbitrator arrives to resolve Islamist differences — paper

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Jordanian newspaper, Al-Urdun, which is close to the Muslim Brotherhood's leadership in Jordan, reported Saturday that an envoy from the International Muslim Brotherhood Organisation (IMBO) Mahmood Mohammad Ismail arrived in Jordan recently to try to settle differences in views between the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood (JMB) and the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party over whether to participate or boycott the coming general elections in Jordan.

The weekly said that the envoy has conveyed the views and the "brotherly advice" of the IMBO's spiritual leader Mustafa Mashour to the JMB.

The JMB's executive bureau convened a meeting attended by the former JMB spiritual leader Hassan Huweidi to study the "advice" according to the paper which said that the envoy had urged the two parties to end their differences, and act as a united team in the coming elections so as to deprive other political groups of the chance of gloating over the absence of Muslim Brotherhood members from parliament.

The paper quoted unnamed sources as saying that the JMB have responded favourably to the envoy's message and is currently undertaking reorganisation steps and preparing lists of their candidates to run in the coming elections in the various constituencies. It said that the names of the JMB candidates could be declared within a week from now.

Israel proposes Aqaba airport be run by independent firm

By Yareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Israel has proposed that the Kingdom's southern airport of Aqaba be managed by an international firm to overcome the deadlock in talks aimed at turning the airport into a major hub serving tourists of both countries, a Cabinet minister said Saturday.

"The Israelis feel that we should think of managing the airport by an independent company," Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Bassam Saket said.

"We are open to this but we can not really say yes unless we have the study done on that particular proposal," Dr. Saket said in an interview with the Jordan Times.

He added once it (the proposal) has been accepted "it has to be an international and neutral firm."

Asked whether Jordan will accept such proposal, the minister said: "We are in the middle of privatisation. If there is a company to handle the Aqaba Airport within the sovereignty of Jordan, then we will go for it."

The minister said that the two sides "have different scenarios" regarding the way the airport should be run, but "we have not really reached

the final scenario except for accepting the principal of using the airport for the region."

"Discussion is one way of reaching a conclusion," the minister said.

Talks on operating the Aqaba port came to a deadlock following a set of new Israeli conditions which the Kingdom considered an infringement on its sovereignty.

Last week, Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs Jawad Anani said that the Kingdom put on hold a pilot flight to Aqaba following the Israeli conditions.

"In any negotiations, there are certain differences which will be reduced," Dr. Saket said.

"Difficulties include what kind of fees are going to be implemented, what kind of aeroplanes allowed to land, is the runway capable of taking 747 jets, what would be the capacity, where are the terminals to be located and who is handling the operations in terms of services, because once you have passengers, you have to have handling capabilities," the minister said.

"Jordan feels that the handling capabilities can be undertaken by Jordan and there is an open discussion on this particular issue," Dr. Saket said.

The minister said that he will meet with his Israeli counterpart, Yitzhak Levy, in Amman this month to discuss this issue adding that experts and technicians are currently meeting.

"The communication with the Israeli side is on, not only between ministers, but also on the technical side at the legal, security, economical and commercial levels," he said.

"We are sticking to the conclusions of the technical side. We do not want, at this time, to jeopardise any talks as a result of the negative side," the minister added.

"Our interest in Jordan is basically consistent with the general policy of making Aqaba a hub, not only for trade but for communication and tourism and for a regionally clean environment," he said.

"Jordan feels that the Aqaba Airport is feasible, so we are going to make it a successful story in terms of services, abilities and at the same time, a linkage between Jordan and the nearby countries," the minister said.

European left denounces EU agreements, NATO

MADRID (AFP) — Left-wing parties from 16 European countries called Saturday for a new vision for Europe, denouncing the agreements made at the European Union's recent Amsterdam summit and the upcoming NATO meeting here.

The 20 parties, claiming to represent 15 million voters, said Europe should put jobs first.

The conference, organised by Spain's communist-led United Left coalition, Izquierda Unida (IU), launched "the start of united action" against the "one-track debate" on the future of Europe, said IU spokesman Julio Anguita.

"Our way is constructive because we propose an alternative political view, opposed to the ultra-liberal-

ism of Maastricht and a Europe run by financial markets," said French communist party leader, Robert Hue.

Maastricht is the Dutch town where the EU treaty on economic and monetary union was signed.

The parties criticised the austerity measures being taken in Europe to enable states to meet the criteria set out in the Maastricht treaty for entry into a single European currency.

Instead, they proposed a Europe which put jobs and the fight against poverty first. They called for a reduction in the working week without loss of pay, the protection of public services and an end to privatisation.

The parties also called for "a new pan-European defence structure" saying

the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was a product of the cold war era and should be disbanded.

Their comments come days before a NATO summit here, Tuesday and Wednesday, to discuss expansion of the Western defence alliance to include eastern European countries.

Earlier, speaking to AFP on the sidelines of the meeting, Mr. Hue said: "We need another concept of security in Europe which is based on cooperation and is not military."

He said the cooperation should go beyond the European Union, referring specifically to Russia and Ukraine.

The conference ends Sunday with a meeting in Leganes, in the Madrid suburbs.



A SCENE FROM MARS: A portion of an airbag rests on one of the solar panels of the spacecraft Pathfinder in a photo released by NASA late Friday, after its landing on Mars. The position of the airbag may delay the Rover's exploration of the surface of the planet (see story on page 4) (Reuters photo)

Jordan, Kuwait work to normalise relations

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Kuwait has expressed its willingness to speed up normalisation of ties between the two countries and said that it is ready to open a new page in relations with Jordan. Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi said Saturday.

Speaking to reporters following the weekly session, Dr. Mutawi said that the Kuwaiti message was delivered by his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Sabah al-Nasser Sabah on the fringes of the Arab information ministers' meeting, which was held in Cairo last week.

"The Kuwaiti minister said that Jordan will retain its special status and indicated that the past stage (in relations between the two countries) was difficult but it is over," the minister said.

The Kingdom's relations with the Gulf emirate deteriorated following the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as a result of Jordan's perceived tilt towards Iraq during the seven-month-old crisis.

"The Kuwaiti minister stressed that understanding would prevail in the relationship between the two countries and the gap would be bridged very soon. He emphasised the Kuwaiti desire that relations between both countries be returned to its past glory," Dr. Mutawi said.

Dr. Mutawi said the Kuwaiti official hinted that the Jordanian press should shoulder "some responsibility" for the deadlock in relation and stressed the need for the "Jordanian press to play a major role in defending Kuwaiti causes."

The minister was referring to the case of more than 600 Kuwaiti prisoners allegedly held by Iraq since the end of the 1990-91 crisis.

The minister denied local news reports that Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh will visit Kuwait in the coming two weeks, hinting that there were no such plans in the horizon.

Last month, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah said that his country was ready to normalise relations with three Arab states that supported Iraq during the Iraqi invasion. These countries are Jordan, Yemen and Sudan.

In a positive signal of improving ties between the two countries, the flag carriers of the two countries will launch their first flights to each other's capitals this week. The first Kuwait Airways flight will arrive here on Wednesday while Royal Jordanian will operate its first flight since the halt in relations to Kuwait next Thursday.

Meanwhile, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have decided to intensify judicial relations between the two countries as a step forward to reach a judicial agreement," Dr. Mutawi said. He added that the decision followed talks held in the UAE by Minister of Justice Riyadh Shakaa with UAE officials.

He added that the two sides agreed that Jordanian experts would help in establishing a criminal court in the Gulf emirate.

He said that the two sides also agreed to exchange judges and legal experts to work in UAE courts and teach in law institutions.

Dr. Mutawi also said the Jordan-Qatar Higher Committee will meet in Doha on July 15 to discuss bilateral relations and economic cooperation. The Jordanian delegation will be headed by Dr. Tarawneh, he said.

He added that among the major issues the committee will discuss are the dual tax system between the two countries, the land, sea and air transportation, and legal, judicial cooperation, encouraging and protecting the investments in the two countries and cooperation in standards and specifications.

He said the two sides will also discuss establishing a joint Jordanian-Qatari phosphate project.



THE HUNGRY MASSES MARCH: Supporters of Sheikh Subhi Tofaili, leader of the radical wing of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah, demonstrate during a meeting where some 10,000 people gathered Friday, under heavy security in the eastern Lebanese city of Baalbek for "a revolution of the hungry". Men, women and children gathered here as the Lebanese army deployed in force in this ancient city in the heart of the Syrian-controlled Bekaa valley (AFP photo)

Ceasefire committee to meet in Lebanon

BEIRUT (AFP) — The international committee monitoring a ceasefire in south Lebanon is to meet Monday to hear violation complaints from both Israel and Lebanon, officials said Saturday.

The committee, which groups France, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and the United States, is to meet at its headquarters in Naqura on the border between Israel and Lebanon.

Lebanon called the meeting after a civilian was injured in an Israeli attack Wednesday, while Israel has filed a complaint over the shelling of its northern territory Thursday from positions in south Lebanon, the Lebanese Foreign Ministry said.

Military officials in Tel Aviv said the shelling did not cause any injuries or damage.

Under the terms of an April 1996 ceasefire between Hizbullah guerrillas and Israel, which ended Israel's 17-day Grapes of Wrath offensive, both sides are banned from targeting civilians in their ongoing conflict.

Israel set up a self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon in 1985 to prevent attacks on its northern border by anti-Israeli guerrillas.

Kuwaiti finance minister to be questioned over public money

'Minister needlessly wasted money, did not collect government funds'

KUWAIT (AP) — Three parliament deputies Saturday sought permission to interrogate the finance minister, a process that could lead to his impeachment, over financial irregularities.

In their request to parliament speaker, the independent lawmakers and another liberal opposition member said finance minister Nasser Rowdhani has "needlessly" wasted state money and failed to "collect money owed to the government."

Details of the allegations were not released and the lawmakers did not give a figure for the money that the alleged mismanagement is said to have cost Kuwait.

Mr. Rowdhani became finance minister in April 1991, shortly after this small oil-rich state was liberated from a seven-month Iraqi occupation.

Seeking permission for interrogation is a formality, and will almost certainly be granted. After the interview, if the lawmakers still feel the minister committed a wrongdoing, they can call for his impeachment in the 50-member house.

But the move is unlikely to succeed since the legislature has a strong pro-government bloc. Members of the liberal opposition and their supporters are in a minority.

In 1995, fundamentalist lawmakers in the country's first post-Gulf war legislature interrogated Ahmed Rubei, a liberal education minister, but failed to impeach him.

Kuwait's rulers dissolved the legislature in 1986 after opposition members stepped up criticism of government ministers. A new parliament was elected in October, and Kuwait remains the only Arab Gulf state to have an elected legislature.

Israeli chief of staff does not want to serve full term — TV

OCUPPED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israeli chief of staff, Amnon Shahak, does not want to serve his full four-year term because of persistent policy disagreements with prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli television said Saturday.

General Shahak, 53, who has held the post since January 1995, will ask to stand down in spring 1998 after celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of Israel, according to Israel's second television network.

An Israeli army spokesman said the report "does not represent the chief of staff's point of view and has been published without his advice."

Gen. Shahak was one of the principal negotiators of the autonomy accords with the Palestinians and has frequently expressed his fears about the future of the peace process.

Chiefs of staff are appointed for three years in Israel but systematically continue for an extra year.

Saudis ban seven professions to foreigners

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia has banned foreigners from work in seven more categories in government contracts as part of its policy to create jobs for its own citizens, the Al Sharq Al Awsat newspaper reported Saturday.

Saudi authorities will no longer issue work permits or extend existing ones to expatriates as labourers, stone masons, painters and four other areas of manual labour in the public sector, according to the London-based newspaper.

The new policy is expected to affect thousands of immigrant workers, many of whom come from the Indian subcontinent, as the work permits have to be renewed every two years. Some foreign workers, however, could continue to find jobs in the private sector, economists said.

The Saudi government already decided in October 1996 to no longer provide permits to expatriates in 13 professions as part of its programme to liberalise the economy and reduce the country's heavy dependence on foreign labourers.

Saudi Arabia, which has a fourth of the world's proven oil reserves, has about six million foreigners living among the country's 18 million population, most of them workers.

PNA police chief scoffs at Israeli shoot-to-kill warnings in Hebron

OCUPPED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A Palestinian police chief on Saturday brushed off an Israeli army threat that it would shoot to kill in clashes with Palestinian stone-throwers in the West Bank town of Hebron.

General Rajoub Rajoub, head of Palestinian Preventive Security in the West Bank, also said his police would resist Israeli pressure to intervene to clamp down on three weeks of protests.

"The threats of death do not impress us and have no political effect," the general told Israeli army radio.

"We are not there to obey Israel and implement the

policy of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu aimed at sinking the peace process," he said.

Asked if police would intervene in line with signed accords with Israel, General Rajoub insisted Israel first respect its own commitments under the agreements.

The commander of Israeli forces in the West Bank, General Gabi Ofir, warned Friday that sterner action would be taken to quell three weeks of bloody clashes in Hebron which have left 220 Palestinian protesters wounded.

"Those who throw explo-

sive devices to kill must understand that they will die, because those are the shooting orders," he said.

The general called on the Palestinian National Authority to intervene to restore calm, "if not, the price could be heavy."

Mr. Netanyahu has accused Palestinian police of organising the protests and violating a January 15 accord handing 80 per cent of Hebron over to Palestinian control.

The accord calls on the Israeli army and Palestinian police force to prevent acts of violence or terrorism.

President Assad claims to have stopped Iraq partition

CAIRO (AFP) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad claimed in a newspaper interview Saturday that he thwarted a plot to partition Iraq between several states.

"The plot to partition Iraq was on the verge of coming off. I say this clearly: Iraq was on the point of being carved up and it was Syria's efforts" which prevented this, Mr. Assad told the Egyptian government daily Al-Ahram.

He did not say who was responsible for the plot or when it took place, saying "the time has not yet come to give details."

Frosty relations between Syria and Iraq, which broke off diplomatic ties in 1980, have begun to thaw in recent months with the reopening of their border to businessmen and their first commercial contracts in decades.

Asked whether the new

trade relations would lead to political normalisation, Mr. Assad replied, "that's it for the time being."

He also said Syria would boycott a Middle East economic conference in Qatar in November because of Israel's participation, lashing out at other Arab countries for being too weak towards Israel.

"What Israel wants amounts to extortion. It's a strange policy — they want the fruits of peace before achieving peace," Mr. Assad said.

"What can we hope for from an Israeli government which ignores moral principles and international resolutions?" he said.

But other Arab countries were not as strong as Syria, he complained. "The problem is not our enemies, it's us the Arabs. We do not use or do not want to use our potential and we look hesitant or weak."

Iran says Muslim-Jewish conflict inevitable

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran warned Saturday that a confrontation between Muslims and Jews is inevitable after an Israeli extremist distributed posters insulting the Prophet Mohammad and Islam.

"For this inevitable confrontation between Islam and Zionism, Islamic countries will have to choose between resistance, humiliation and compromise," state radio said.

"The Zionist regime has put pictures which are even more insulting to Islam on the Internet," the radio said in a commentary.

It also said Israel had offended Christianity with a photo-montage showing the Virgin Mary with a cow's head which appeared in an Israeli magazine article on human cloning.

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

15:35 French Programmes
16:05 Tennis Men's Final (Live from Wimbledon)
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headline
19:35 Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
20:00 Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
20:30 The Churchills
21:10 Renegade
22:00 News in English
22:30 One West Walkie
23:15 Sisters

PRAYER TIMES

03:56 Fair
05:31 (Sunrise) Doha
12:40 Dhuhur
16:12 Asr
19:50 Maghreb
21:24 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Amman International Church Tel. 5516245
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

Aqaba 26/40
Deserts 20/38
Jordan Valley 25/41

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 34, Aqaba 39 Humidity readings: Amman 27 per cent, Aqaba 27 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Issam Assar 890504
Dr. Youssef Naser 751144
Dr. Khalid Klob 816715
Dr. Nidal As'ad 751672
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Hafez Salfit 914144
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 621111/637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Dept. 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
J. Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Co. 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/2
Khalidi Maternity 64281/6
Akileh Maternity 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 66727/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Bn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

08-53200

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
10:00 Bombay (RJ)
10:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:15 Amman (RJ)
10:15 Beirut (RJ)
10:20 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:20 Bahrain (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
04:30 Jeddah (RJ)

Other Flights

12:00 Sanaa (SV)
12:00 Jeddah (SV)
13:30 Bahrain (GF)
14:25 Moscow (SU)
16:35 Cairo (MS)
22:25 Amsterdam (KL)
02:00 Beirut (ME)
07:00 London (BA)
07:55 Tel Aviv (LY)

Other Flights

13:30 Jeddah (SV)
13:30 Sanaa (SV)
14:25 Doha (GF)
16:35 Moscow (SU)
22:25 Cairo (MS)
00:45 Amsterdam (KL)
02:00 Beirut (ME)
07:00 London (BA)
07:55 Tel Aviv (LY)

Regent inspects Balqa examination halls

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, the Regent, Saturday inspected examination halls in the Balqa governorate, where more than 300 students took an English language exam.

This was a second round of tests as last month the test was officially annulled by the Ministry of Education, following disturbances in the examination halls.

Accompanied by Minister of Education and Higher Education Munther Masri, the Regent toured the examination halls and was briefed on arrangements, ensuring discipline and an unperturbed examination session.

Subsequent to the Regent's visit, Ministry Secretary General Izzat Jaradat said told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that no disturbances occurred during the examination ses-



HRH Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, the Regent, Saturday inspects examination halls in the Balqa governorate (Petra photo)

He thanked the Public Security Department (PSD) their assistance and other authorities for arrangements.

Minister responds to wave of anti-Israel stickers

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In the first official reaction to a recent wave of anti-Israel stickers in Amman, Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi Saturday declared that the Kingdom would not allow its citizens to post anti-Israeli signs in their shops and on their property.

Speaking to reporters following a weekly Cabinet session, Dr. Mutawi conceded that these anti-Israel stickers came in response to the deadlocked Middle East peace process.

"I think that, as a result of widespread public disappointment in the region, some like phenomena surfaces," Dr. Mutawi maintained. "But these occurrences reflect neither prevalent public nor government sentiment."

"The government in no way con-

done these actions and will adopt a firm stand for their future prevention," the minister said.

Amman of late has witnessed anti-Israel stickers affixed by some shopkeepers which prohibit Israelis from entering certain shops as well as call for halting any transactions with Israeli visitors.

Majed Hattar, 32, was arrested Thursday by police after posting a sticker banning Israelis from entering his shop in Jabal Weibdeh.

Following his release Saturday, Mr. Hattar told the Jordan Times that the interrogators demanded "an apology" for his actions.

"They did not say to whom I should apologise," he added.

"The governor called me today (Saturday) and demanded an apology," Mr. Hattar stated. "However, I refused and told him that I cannot apologise for a deed which I do not believe to be

wrong."

He described the sticker's removal as effected "by force" and further stated that some damage to his shop occurred at the time of his arrest.

"I was forcibly arrested without any official warrant," Mr. Hattar remonstrated. "I will sue them for what they did."

According to the shopkeeper, the interrogators queried him as to "who was behind the decision to affix the sticker."

Waddah Bargouthi, owner of a supermarket in the Fourth Circle, was earlier arrested and interrogated for posting a sign in English which read "No Dogs, No Jews" but was later released and obligated to remove the sign.

Security officials confirmed that Mr. Bargouthi will face charges of "anti-semitism."

Prosecution requests Dakamseh's full conviction

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The military prosecution, in the case of Corporal Ahmad Dakamseh, the Jordanian soldier accused of killing seven Israeli schoolgirls last March in the northern town of Baqoura, Saturday described the defendant as "perverted and deviant" and asked for a full conviction on all charges.

Cpl. Dakamseh is charged with premeditated murder, attempted murder, menacing use of a firearm and military mutiny. He pleaded not guilty to all charges in June.

"This perverted and deviant man decided on his own to end the lives of seven innocent young girls," Military Prosecutor Lieutenant Colonel Muhannad Hijazi told the court-room in his closing argument. "Answer me, gentlemen — how would you feel if the victims were your own daughters?"

In his 39-page closing argument, Mr. Hijazi also justified all prosecution procedures related to the March 13 shooting incident, which left an additional four students and one teacher injured.

"We followed the same legal procedures as we would in any criminal case," Mr. Hijazi, one of five prosecutors who investigated the shooting incident, asserted.

During the two-hour court session, he compared the defendant's confession and statements in court to evidence presented in court by the prosecution. "The defendant confessed and then told the court that he was not subjected to any kind of duress or torture, and that he willingly [cooperated with] investigators," Prosecutor Hijazi said.

The prosecutor referred to sworn witness testimony that, prior to the March incident in the northern town of Baqoura, Cpl. Dakamseh had plotted to kill Israelis.

"Cpl. Dakamseh's colleagues testified that the defendant bade a last farewell to his family before returning to his division from a vacation; had asked his wife to take care of his children; stated that he felt that he was going to die, and told one colleague on the morning of the incident: 'today you will see something which you have never before seen,'" he affirmed.

Atty. Hijazi rejected the testimonies of expert witnesses for the defence, who classified the personality disorder from which, they said, the defendant suffered as a mental disorder.

"According to recent medical encyclopaedias, a personality disorder is not tantamount to a mental disorder, which contradicts psychology experts' court testimonies," Prosecutor Hijazi said.

If convicted, Cpl. Dakamseh could face the death penalty which, according to Jordanian military law, cannot be appealed.

Defence Attorney Hussein Mjalli asked the court for a one-month period to prepare his closing argument in the case.

But the military court, headed by Judge Brigadier General Ma'moun Khasawneh and including Justices Colonel Youssef Faouri, Lieutenant Generals Aref Syouf, Mahmoud Obeidat and Major Fawaz Bqour, turned down the request and gave Atty. Mjalli one week for his preparation, thereby adjourning the court until Saturday July 12.

Much of Cpl. Dakamseh's family was barred from entering yesterday's court session, according to some family members.

"The court allowed only his mother and his wife to attend the court session, but [even] they decided not to attend the session in order to register protest," one family member told the Jordan Times, following the session's conclusion.

Defence calls for complete acquittal of Mazen Masri

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The defence team, in the case of Mazen Masri, a 34-year-old man who reportedly confessed to murdering his two children in the Shmeisani neighbourhood of Amman last September, Saturday asked the Criminal Court to fully acquit his client of all charges.

Mr. Masri allegedly told authorities that he had poisoned his two children, Hanin, nine, and Hani, six, by administering two cyanide pills to them before leaving for work on the morning of Sept. 11.

He faces two charges of premeditated murder and three counts of attempted murder.

"How could a father kill his two children, his own flesh and blood?" Defence Attorney Ahmad Nujdawi asked in a 35-page closing argument.

Atty. Nujdawi argued that, following the children's deaths, his client was investigated by Shmeisani police under duress.

"My client was subjected to threats and simultaneously deceived into the belief that if he admitted to committing this crime, he would receive a reduced sentence," Mr. Nujdawi said during the 45-minute session. "Therefore, his confessions are not valid [evidence]."

The presence of Chief Attorney Fathi Rifai at the police station during his client's interrogations "renders the investigations null and void."

In January, Mr. Masri, who entered a plea of not guilty, claimed that he had fabricated his confessions to avert psychological pressure administered by authorities.

He further maintained, that he decided to fabricate the story as the authorities "threatened to substitute my wife and parents, instead of myself, for questioning."

According to Atty. Nujdawi, there was also a contradiction in the prosecution's evidence, concerning the percentage of cyanide detected in the children's blood.

Criminal lab experts testified last year that between 600-650 milligrammes of cyanide salts were detected in the children's blood samples.

However, in April, an expert witness for the defence testified that, in order for such a high amount of cyanide to be present in the children's blood, each of them would have had to have consumed at least three large cyanide pills.

The expert testimony contradicted both Mr. Masri's alleged confession that he administered one cyanide pill to each child and the criminal lab report.

Mr. Masri also reportedly confessed to earlier murder attempts.

Three months prior to the September incident, he opened a gas cylinder while his family slept in the couple's bedroom at Abu Oneizah Housing Complex, according to his reported confession.

According to the prosecution charge sheet, Mr. Masri began evidencing domestic trouble three months subsequent to his 1987 marriage and financial constraints following his second child's birth.

In his Sept. 25 confession, he blamed his wife, Hiam Hamoudeh, 32, for these problems, claiming that she was extravagant and refused to aid him in the business which he established in 1991.

The children were found incapacitated in the apartment by their mother at approximately 7:15 a.m. on the morning of the incident. Ms. Hamoudeh stated that she left her children at home to drive her husband to work.

In its closing argument on June 3, the prosecution asked for the defendant's full conviction of all charges.

The court tribunal, headed by Judge Abdul Rahman Tawfiq and including Justices Mifleh Mubeidin and Ibrahim Ali, postponed the case for Sept. 2 and will either issue a verdict at that time or subpoena witnesses.

Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee opens meeting to discuss cooperation

CAIRO (J.T.) — The Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee, co-chaired by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and his Egyptian counterpart Kamal Jazouiri, opened a two-day meeting in Cairo Saturday to discuss cooperation in trade, economic and tourism arenas, according to Jordan Television.

The two countries will also discuss the creation of an Arab common market to promote inter-Arab economic cooperation, and the Middle East peace process.

Increasing cooperation in tourism, Jordanian-Egyptian power linkage projects and the employment of Egyptian workers in Jordan are other topics on the meeting's agenda.

A joint technical committee which met in Cairo last week prepared the agenda for the talks. This committee, co-chaired by Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki and the Egyptian Minister of Economy and International Cooperation Nawal Tawfiq, signed the agenda of subjects to be covered during the meeting.

According to Dr. Mulki, the two sides initiated the final version of an agreement linking a power network between Jordan and Egypt and recommended that work be accelerated to

supply Jordan with Egyptian natural gas.

According to an Egyptian government official, the two countries are currently negotiating the most propitious route for the pipeline's placement.

Egypt has recently discovered huge gas reserves and can provide Jordan with sufficient gas to fulfil its needs, he added.

A pipeline, 270 kilometres in length, will be placed across the Sinai Peninsula to Aqaba and is estimated to transport 200 million cubic feet of gas daily, beginning the year 2001 and gradually increasing to 400 million cubic feet daily in order to meet industrial needs in the Kingdom.

According to Dr. Mulki, the committee recommended signing an executive programme for the Jordanian-Egyptian agreements on culture, education, scientific research, tourism, youth and sports over the next four years.

The committee also recommended that the two countries endorse current measures regarding the entry of Egyptian workers into Jordan, according to Dr. Mulki.

He voiced satisfaction with the level of coordination between the chambers

of industry and trade in the two countries, which, he said, would further enhance the private sector's role in economic development.

The total volume of trade between Egypt and Jordan in 1996 was estimated at 140 million Egyptian pounds, and the two countries currently hold equal shares in 139 joint projects which include chemical, industrial and tourist-related projects along with those related to construction material, Dr. Mulki affirmed.

The technical committee reviewed existing trade exchanges between the two countries and endorsed a special agreement on investment protection. The technical committee also studied issues related to telecommunications and land transport as well as prospects for exempting transport vehicles from taxes and entry fees.

Dr. Majali's accompanying delegation includes ministers of transport and telecommunications, education and higher education, industry, trade and supply, culture and youth, labour, energy and mineral resources, tourism and antiquities and the chairman of the Jordanian Businessmen's Association.

Social-Democrats launch campaign to 'reinstate channels of communication'

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Expressing concern over an "increasing loss of trust in the electoral process as a real instrument for change," the Social-Democrats of the Jordanian Unionist Democratic Party (JUDP) yesterday launched a campaign to "reinstate channels of communication between the government and the public."

"We are sounding the alarm," JUDP President Issa Madanat Saturday stated during a press conference, warning the government against the dangers of "not [initiating] a real and transparent dialogue with the people."

In an open communiqué dispatched to the government, union representatives, professional associations, political parties and the press, the Social-Democrats requisitioned "informal extraordinary Parliament sessions to restore people's trust in the democratisation process and promote participation in the upcoming general elections."

Describing the "general mood" of the Jordanian public as "demoralised," Mr. Madanat and other JUDP leaders urged the

government to "freeze" some articles of the newly-introduced temporary Press and Publications Law, in order to allow "freer electoral campaigns."

"The Press and Publications Law [has already been promulgated] and little can be done now, however we can still mobilise people to pressure the government not to strictly apply the new regulations until a new Parliament has convened," former Minister of Labour Mustafa Shueikat stated.

Controversial amendments introduced in May to the 1993 Press and Publications Law increased restrictions on issues deemed fit for publication, raised fines for legal violations, and empowered courts to suspend publication of any paper found to be in violation of the law. These amendments drew strong condemnation from international groups concerned with press freedoms.

The opposition describes these new regulations, whose introduction coincided with preparations for this autumn's elections, as potentially narrowing opportunities for effective campaigning for those candidates who do not benefit from strong tribal support. Together with Messrs.

Madanat and Shakhaneh, JUDP Secretary General Musa Ma'ateh and Zarga Deputy Bassam Haddadin co-chaired the press conference.

When queried as to a possible strategy for the upcoming elections, Mr. Madanat declined to disclose the number of candidates his party intends to field, but a party source told the Jordan Times that five JUDP candidates are likely to compete for seats in the 80-member Lower House.

As for the long-awaited "progressive coalition," for the last four months, the JUDP along with pan-Arabist Al Mustaqbal, led by Suleiman Arar, and former Prime Ministers Taher Masri and Ahmad Obeidat, have been engaged in intense discussions.

Mr. Madanat faulted "some independents" for a current stalemate in negotiations.

"We have already agreed on the political principles and the organisational aspects of the unification of our two parties with Mr. Arar," Mr. Madanat told the Jordan Times, adding that "there are no problems whatsoever [impeding] the unification of our two parties (the JUDP and Al Mustaqbal)."

As for the third party involved in these negotiations, Mr. Madanat described Mr. Masri as "very enthusiastic."

Obstacles to the resolution of the stalemate seem to hinge on Mr. Obeidat, who, according to Mr. Madanat, is also enthusiastic, however might be stymied in cementing the coalition through the influence of "some independents [surrounding] him."

"As I understood from him personally, and from what others have told me, some independents around him [do not share his enthusiasm], and he is taking time to convince them, and win them to our cause," Mr. Madanat stated.

The Jordan Times learned that among these independent personalities there are former deputies and former ministers, as well as one prominent human rights activist.

If finalised, the progressive alliance would be the third block to consolidate during the pre-electoral phase, after the nine-centrist parties of the newly-established National Constitutional Party (NCP), and the leftists of the Jordanian Nationalist Democratic Front (JNDF).

Seminar encourages domestic tourism

PETRA (Petra) — A seminar bolstering domestic tourism, held in Petra Saturday, called for close cooperation between public and private sectors in amending legislation and regulations in order to allocate a greater tourist role to the private sector.

The meeting, organised by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in conjunction with tourist and travel agencies and various Jordanian universities, emphasised comprehensive tourist development plans catering to international tourism requirements and encouraging local institutions to finance tourist investment projects.

Subsequent to the close of the three-day meeting, a statement urged the Ministry of Education to include tourism courses in school curricula and reschedule holidays for seasons of lesser tourism to the Kingdom.

Seminar recommendations also included the establishment of university departments specialising in tourism and research studies focusing on the promotion of tourism in Jordan.

The meeting advised the organisation of conferences and seminars to resolve problems currently facing the tourism industry.

Meeting participants reviewed obstacles to domestic tourism such as costliness, hotel rates, and media campaigns to encourage visits to Jordanian archaeological and tourist sites.

They also announced the creation of a Jordanian commission comprising 18 tourist offices to stimulate domestic tourism.

UJRS organising seminar

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre (UJRS) will Monday open a seminar entitled "Women's involvement in Arab politics."

Over 100 women are scheduled to participate in the seminar, held under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor.

Participants hail from Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco and Jordan. Contributing researchers are arriving from Norway, Sweden and the United States.

The four-day seminar will cover wide-ranging issues related to Arab women's participation in parliamentary elections, political party involvement, civic institutions, and encouraging women to enter politics in the Arab World.

Participants will also discourse on the specific manifestation of these issues in their own countries, according to a UJRS statement. UJRS Director General Hani Horani will report on various aspects of women's political participation in the Arab World during the opening session, the statement said.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

*Photography exhibition by Jan Kassay, at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until July 29.

*Fifth exhibition of Korean products at the Amman International Motor Show, until July 7.

*Paintings by Ali Al Ghoul at Greater Amman Municipality Cultural Department, Ras Al 'Ain, until July 31.

*"Silver Jewelry exhibition" at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, until July 20.

*Karim Rasin's works at the Orient Gallery, until July 10.

*Paintings by contemporary Iraqi artists entitled "Ecology and Environment in Iraqi Art" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until July 12 (except Tuesdays).

*"Contemporary Arab Artists Exhibition," showing works of 60 Arab artists, at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh until July 24.

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Blair calls for 'reason' over N. Ireland parade

PORTADOWN (R) — British Prime Minister Tony Blair said Saturday he wanted reason to prevail in Northern Ireland as tension grew over a decision on the holding of a flashpoint Protestant Orange Order parade.

Mr. Blair, speaking in Britain, said the government was doing everything possible to reconcile the pro-British Orange Order and Catholic Irish Nationalists who want Sunday's march along the Garvaghy Road of Portadown banned.

"The real hope and possibility exist for peace. I hope that the voice of reason can be heard in Northern Ireland," said Mr. Blair, adding his voice to a chorus of appeals to avoid a repeat of last year's upheaval caused by the same parade.

British troops and local police in armoured jeeps threw a cordon around the southern town, where rival British and Irish flags flew as the authorities weighed whether to ban, permit or reroute the Sunday parade.

The timing of the decision was not known but government sources said it was expected by nightfall to allow maximum time for mediation between the two sides.

A Protestant cleric urged his faithful to accept whatever decision is made and spare the province from violence.

"My prayer and my advice to the whole Orange Order is that whatever decision is taken we have got to be peaceful and lawful and this country must not be plunged into the terrors of violence and bigotry and intolerance we saw last year," the Reverend William Bingham told the BBC.

Rev. Bingham, grand chaplain to the Orange Order, was speaking from Portadown, a mainly Protestant city some 60 kilometres south of Belfast.

Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam appealed to order Saturday to "listen to the voices of reason" in a thinly-veiled message to the parade and avoid province-wide violence it unleashed last year.

But spokesmen for the order, a religiously-based pro-British organisation, showed no sign of heeding her appeal and have refused contact with the Catholic residents of the Garvaghy Road area who say the parade is sectarian intimidation.

There was no indication which way the decision, to be taken by police or Mrs. Mowlam, would go but Protestants and Catholics were united in the fear that it would provoke violence.

The Orange Order says the march is a birthright and that the road belongs to the

British monarch, not to those who live beside it, and that to bow to the residents' wishes insults their religion, civil rights and British loyalties.

The parade has become a trial of strength between pro-British Protestants and pro-Irish Catholic Nationalists whose rival allegiances have split the province for seven decades.

In the middle is the new Labour government of Prime Minister Tony Blair which pledged after winning May 1 elections that the 60 per cent Protestant majority and 40 per cent Catholic minority would enjoy equal rights.

The dispute is hanging over Anglo-Irish efforts to give a stalemate Northern Ireland peace process a new lease of life and persuade Catholic-backed Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas to call a halt to their war against British rule.

Last year the march, known as Drumcree after the small Protestant church at which the Orange Order stops for prayers, erupted into days of rioting which shut down roads, the airport and towns and caused millions of pounds of damage.

Police at first banned the parade then bowed to Protestant rioting and let it go ahead, igniting Catholic fury instead.



Cambodian soldiers loyal to Second Prime Minister Hun Sen sit on top of an armoured personnel carrier on a Phnom Penh street Saturday. Forces loyal to Cambodia's co-premiers Prince Norodom Ranariddh and Mr. Hun Sen clashed Saturday on the outskirts of Phnom Penh after a long feud over power sharing and how to resolve the Khmer Rouge issue (Reuters photo)

U.S. spacecraft beams back Martian landscape photos

PASADENA (R) — The dramatic features of the Martian landscape and sky were captured in spectacular fashion by the spacecraft Pathfinder Friday, hours after it made an historic landing in Mars' vast Ares Vallis region.

Excited scientists planned an intensive study of the photographs after more were beamed down by the Pathfinder landing vehicle.

The pictures, the first transmitted to Earth in 21 years, since the 1976 Viking mission, showed a reddish-brown, desert-like, rock-strewn surface with hills in the background set against a reddish-brown Martian sky.

The vast array of rocks, large and small, in the immediate vicinity of the spacecraft prompted project scientist Matt Golombek to say at a briefing late Friday: "There are many wondrous things to see and many wondrous things to do."

The salmon-coloured sky, he said, appeared to have been caused by red dust kicked up from the surface by the Martian winds.

Mr. Golombek said once the Mars rover known as Sojourner got onto the surface it probably would not travel more than about 10 to 20 metres because of the rich harvest of rocks in the area.

Only one glitch clouded an otherwise picture-perfect day, in which Pathfinder's pinpoint landing exceeded the most optimistic expectations of the crew. Friday evening's photo session showed that two of the airbags that cushioned the craft's landing had not fully retracted and were intruding on the pad on which the rover was sitting.

Rover scientists feared that the protruding airbags would prevent ramps, which the rover would use to reach the surface, from being deployed. Scientists in mission control at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena ordered the spacecraft to raise the pad under which the airbags were supposed to rest, and retract the airbags more, which it did.

A command was then sent to deploy the front ramp,

but plans to put the rover on the Martian surface late Friday night were scrapped. Rover manager Jake Matcivik said the rover probably wouldn't leave the lander until about 7:30 p.m. PDT Saturday (0230 GMT Sunday).

He said the plans were for the rover to take a short stroll on the surface, making a right turn after leaving the ramp and looking at a nearby rock before shutting its systems down for the night. Mr. Matcivik also said computers on board the lander and the rover weren't talking to each other — an essential element of the mission because commands to the rover are sent through the lander — but added he was confident the problem could be solved.

The rover had been pre-programmed and could carry out its photographic mission but would not be able to receive orders to analyse the contents of specific rocks without communicating with the lander, he added.

Nevertheless, scientists

said that landing on the red planet was a red letter day for the exploration of Mars.

President Bill Clinton also hailed the achievement, saying, "our return to Mars today marks the beginning of a new era in the nation's space exploration programme."

Pathfinder will be followed by four more landing craft and five orbiting space vehicles over the next eight years, culminating in a landing by a robotic craft that will collect rock and soil samples and return them to Earth for microscopic examination. Eventually, NASA hopes, there will be a manned exploration of the planet.

A key goal of the eight-year project is to find out if life, even in its most primitive form, existed on Mars billions of years ago.

Pathfinder, although paving the way for future missions, is not taking part in the search for life. "This is a rock mission, not a life mission," Mr. Golombek stressed.

Serb hardliners gather support against Plavsic

PALE (R) — Bosnian Serb Nationalists, closing ranks and claiming the support of Yugoslavia, are confident they can remove their rebellious President Biljan Plavsic from power despite Western opposition.

Sources at a crisis session of the Bosnian Serb parliament which was due to continue Saturday said control by hard-liners of the Constitutional Court, the Assembly, the government and the police would ensure Mrs. Plavsic's defeat.

The Nationalist faction, allied to ex-president and indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic, also claimed the backing of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

The parliament began meeting near Mr. Karadzic's

Pale stronghold Friday in defiance of an attempt by Mrs. Plavsic to disband it and hold general elections on Sept. 1.

Senior officials of the ruling SDS party brushed aside her allegations that corruption involving Mr. Karadzic and state-owned companies in the Bosnian Serb Republic was being protected by the police.

They claimed she violated her constitutional rights by trying to dissolve parliament and suspend Police Chief Dragan Kijac, an important Karadzic loyalist.

The display of hard-line unity made Mrs. Plavsic look isolated in her presidential seat of Banja Luka in northern Bosnia despite a show of support for her by

demonstrators Friday.

"I'm sorry this happened but crime must be stopped," Mrs. Plavsic told them.

"(War) victims did not fall for a state of thieves but for a state of honest people."

Mrs. Plavsic embarked on her conflict with the hard-liners a week ago when she tried to replace Mr. Kijac for refusing to investigate two suspect state companies involving Mr. Karadzic and his senior aide Momcilo Krajisnik.

Defending himself in parliament, Mr. Kijac claimed Mrs. Plavsic was the victim of foreign manipulation intended to harm the Bosnian Serb Republic by driving a wedge between her and the SDS leadership. The corruption charges

against Mr. Karadzic were a smear intended to make his arrest on war crimes charges more acceptable to Serb public opinion, he added.

SDS officials said before the parliament session that the Constitutional Court had ruled against Mrs. Plavsic's claim she had the right to disband parliament.

Mrs. Plavsic has so far had tentative support from international mediators who fear that her replacement by a hard-line nominee would further complicate the slow-moving Bosnian peace process.

But they have backed down in the past when the hard-liners have ousted officials regarded as being too conciliatory to the West and the peace agreement.

Fighting continues in Cambodian capital

PHNOM PENH (R) — Fighting continued in Phnom Penh between rival Cambodian government troops as darkness fell Saturday after the country's powerful second prime minister ordered a crackdown on "illegal troops" under his rival's command.

Fighting broke out after dusk near the well-fortified compound where top generals and officials loyal to First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh live close to the city centre.

Witnesses said automatic rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and tanks were used as troops loyal to Second Prime Minister Hun Sen moved into the area and forces loyal to Prince Ranariddh counter-attacked.

There were no reports of casualties among the combatants but streams of civilians were leaving the neighbourhood where the fighting was taking place. A Reuters reporter saw one wounded woman.

Intermittent explosions could be heard in the city centre, some five kilometres from the scene of the fighting.

The two prime ministers head a deadlocked coalition government set up after United Nations-run elections in 1993.

A long-running row over power sharing between them has been inflamed in recent weeks by deep differences over how to deal with the divided Khmer Rouge guerrilla groups.

There were also reports of a clash between forces loyal to the rival prime ministers in northwestern Battambang province near the border with Thailand, Cambodian border officials said.

Diplomats in Phnom Penh said there were unconfirmed reports of clashes elsewhere in the country including southeastern Svay Rieng province.

A general loyal to Prince Ranariddh said Mr. Hun Sen's forces had captured more than 100 of his men. A radio station run by Prince Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC party went off the air without explanation.

Mr. Hun Sen's troops blocked main thoroughfares in Phnom Penh and armoured personnel carriers were stationed at strategic locations around the city.

Earlier Saturday, troops loyal to the feuding prime ministers clashed near a base under Prince Ranariddh's control near Phnom Penh Airport. Later in the day there were reports of fresh clashes near the base.

Travellers trying to get to Phnom Penh from Bangkok reported their flights were cancelled. A Reuters photographer said Royal Air Cambodia said flights would be cancelled Sunday as well.

Mr. Hun Sen said in a radio and television broadcast earlier Saturday that he had to take action against what he described as illegal troops and weapons in order to maintain law and order.

He said the fighting did not signal civil war. Neither of the prime ministers was in the country Saturday. A Vietnamese official in Hanoi said Mr. Hun Sen was on vacation in Vietnam while an official of the Cambodian embassy in Bangkok said the prince was visiting family in France.

In Paris, a Cambodian embassy official confirmed that Prince Ranariddh was in the French capital but could not confirm a French television report that he was trying to cut short his stay to return home.

On Monday, Mr. Hun Sen accused Prince Ranariddh's military commanders of bringing defectors from the Khmer Rouge guerrilla group into Phnom Penh to boost his troop strength. He said he would use force to prevent any illegal troop buildup.

Prince Ranariddh denied the accusation. A spokesman for Mr. Hun Sen said Saturday's action was taken against illegal Khmer Rouge forces and weapons in the city.

2 Britons taken hostage in Chechnya

MOSCOW (R) — Two British aid workers have been taken hostage in Russia's breakaway Chechnya region, Interfax News Agency said Saturday.

The two, a married couple, were seized Thursday night but they had not registered with the authorities, who only found out Saturday, the agency quoted Shamkhan Gagayev, an official from Chechnya's Interior Ministry as saying.

They had arrived in the Chechen capital on June 2 to work for the Grozny-based Centre for Peace and Development treating some of the children who suffered in 21 months of fighting between Chechen separatists and Russian troops.

Adnan Adayev, deputy director of the centre, told the agency that people in masks and armed with guns had taken them overnight.

Mr. Gagayev, who heads the ministry's department dealing with kidnappings, said three people had been arrested Saturday morning in connection with the seizure.

Two were the couple's bodyguards, who allegedly did nothing to stop them being taken and did not inform police, and the third was the deputy director for the Centre for Child Rehabilitation, Mr. Gagayev said.

Chechen Interior Minister Khazbek Makhshav said he had no information on the reported seizure or any idea where the captives were being held, Interfax said. No one at the British embassy in Moscow was immediately available for comment.

Gangs have regularly taken hostages in Chechnya and demanded ransom since fighting with Russia ended last August. Interfax said several dozen people were currently being held, including five Russian television journalists.

The last foreign captive, an Austrian businessman, was freed after an operation by the Chechen authorities at the end of May, Interfax said.

The separatist leaders of Chechnya, who success-

fully fought off Russian troops sent to crush their independence bid, have pledged to do all they can to free the captives, who they say are taken by rogue groups of criminals.

Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov has issued a decree saying hostage-takers would face the death penalty and their accomplices would get 15 years in jail.

The death penalty has been dropped from Russia's new criminal code but Mr. Maskhadov has introduced elements of Islamic Sharia law in his mainly-Muslim region.

More than 20 people have been charged by the Sharia courts with hostage-taking, Interfax said.

Moscow, which signed a ceasefire last August and withdrew its last troops from Chechnya early this year, has sent delegates to try to secure the hostages' release.

The authorities say money is only handed over for information as to the captives' whereabouts.

China steps up anti-Taiwan offensive with series of seminars

BEIJING (AFP) — China has stepped up its political offensive against Taiwan following the Hong Kong handover with a series of seminars on the "rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," a report said Saturday.

The first of the seminars was held recently in the city of Dongguan, in southern Guangdong province, gathering 70 scholars from the inland areas, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

A series of similar meetings will take place over the next few weeks, ahead of the October meeting of the 15th National People's Congress (NPC), China's rubber-stamp parliament.

"The homecoming of Hong Kong is an important and historic step in the long journey toward China's reunification and national rejuvenation," said Qian Weichang, chairman of the China Council for Promoting Peaceful Reunification.

"The Taiwan authorities should follow the trend of development and stop engaging in activities to create 'two Chinas' and 'one China, one Taiwan,'" Mr. Qian was quoted as telling the Dongguan conference.

"It is a common aspiration of all Chinese people ... to

resolve the questions of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan," Mr. Qian added, just days after the former British colony's return to Chinese rule.

Since the handover of sovereignty at midnight Monday, China has stepped up pressure on Taiwan, which it wants to integrate under the same "one country, two systems" formula, which Hong Kong is now ruled by.

Beijing has regarded Taiwan as a rebel province since the end of a civil war in 1949, when Kuomintang forces fled to the island after defeat at the hands of Mao Tse-tong's Communists.

Taipei has pursued a vigorous campaign for international recognition, which Beijing views as a concerted drive towards formal independence.

On Tuesday, Chinese President Jiang Zemin urged Taiwan to take "concrete steps" to reunify with China after presiding over handover ceremonies in Hong Kong.

"Macao will come back soon and the promising prospect of a complete national reunification and all-round rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is now in sight," Mr. Jiang told an 80,000-strong rally in

Beijing. China will resume control over the Portuguese territory of Macau in 1999.

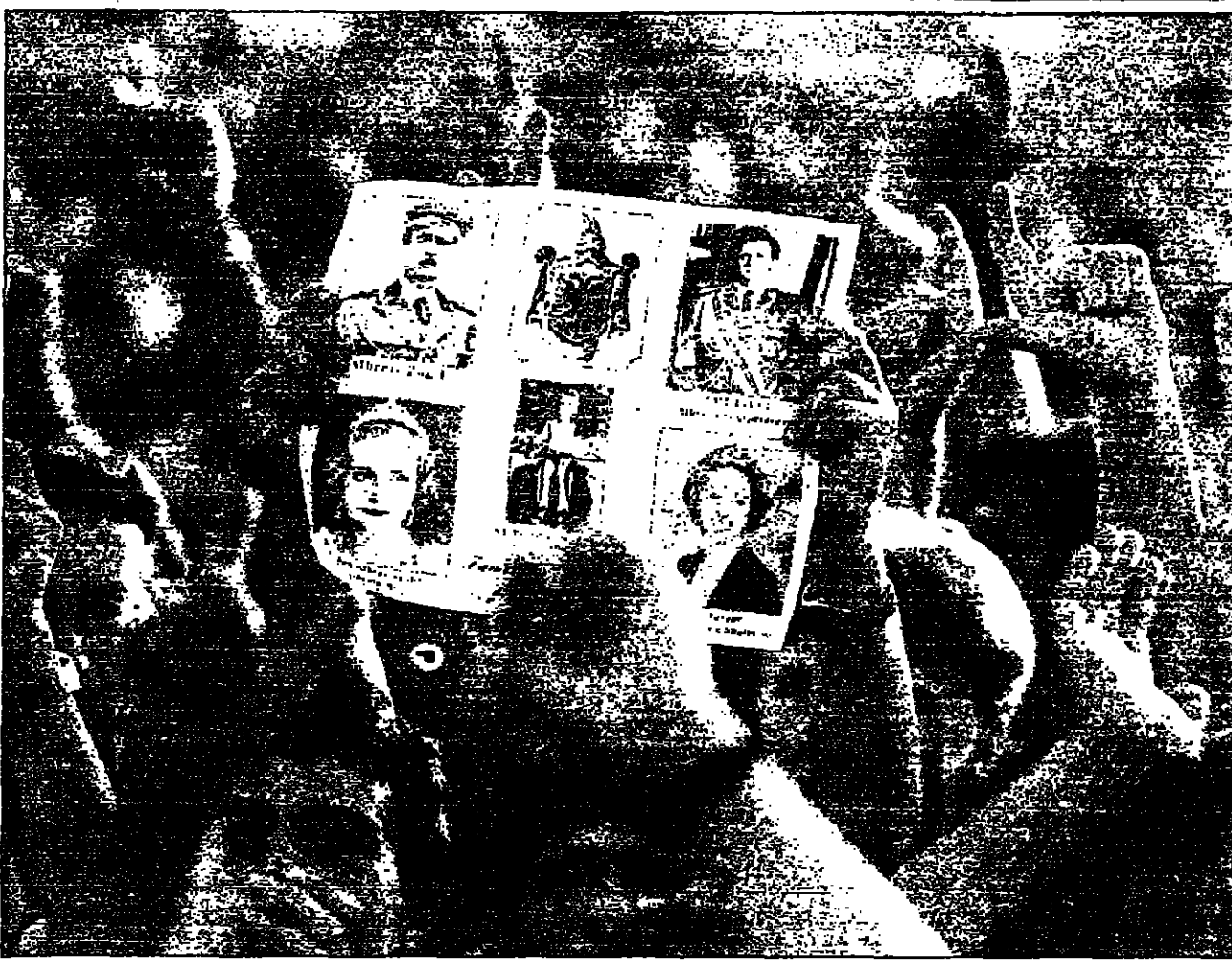
"Hong Kong will set an example for the smooth return of Macau and for a final solution to the Taiwan question," he said in a speech broadcast live nationwide.

"We hope that the Taiwan authorities will ... truly return to the 'one China' position and take concrete steps towards the development of cross-strait relations and to the complete reunification of the country," he said.

Mr. Jiang's comments were run again on the front page of the People's Daily here Saturday.

But Wednesday, Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui rejected the "one country, two systems" formula as a basis for reunification but renewed his offer to visit Beijing for talks.

"The 'one country, two systems' model won't work. It never happened before that a Communist or Socialist system coexisted with democracy," Mr. Lee said in an hour-long interview with AFP Chairman Jean Mioc.



Supporters of Albanian self-proclaimed King Leka I hold up a poster of the royal family during a Monarchist rally in the centre of Tirana Friday. The Monarchists, who accused police of firing into the crowd Thursday, vowed to hold a new peaceful protest later Friday and said King Leka would attend, but this time would not don his fatigues (Reuters photo)

Critical Albanian election goes to run-off round

TIRANA (R) — Albania's general election, aimed at restoring order to a country plucked from the edge of chaos, goes to a final round this weekend with the main question being the size of the victory by the opposition Socialists.

The Socialists inflicted heavy losses on President Sali Berisha's Democratic Party in the first round of Albania's fourth election since the end of 45 years of hardline communism and hope to win more Sunday in the 32 districts where no candidate got 50 per cent of the vote.

Mr. Berisha, in power since 1992, has admitted defeat and says he will resign once a leftist government was installed.

"Two days before the run-off, election officials finally sent the list of second-round contests to European monitors in time to have ballots printed in Rome, but they provided no breakdown of seats won by each party.

Soldiers from a 7,000-strong international protec-

tion force staged a show of strength Friday, with a dozen vehicles parked outside the election count headquarters to prevent a repeat of the shooting which erupted there at a Monarchist rally Thursday.

The troops, led by an Italian contingent, cruised Tirana's streets to support Albanian police and ensure that a second Royalist rally in central Skanderbeg Square stayed peaceful.

Self-proclaimed King Leka I was there among 200 supporters, but minus the battle fatigues and pistols he had on the previous day when one man was killed in the shooting.

"A monarchy is the only way to crush communism," shouted demonstrators, who alleged that the Socialists rigged a referendum last Sunday on restoring the monarchy. Partial results indicate voters rejected the monarchy by nearly two to one.

Rival political parties traded charges of responsibility for Thursday's violence. Socialist leader Fatos

Nano said Albanians "had to disarm those few minds in Albanian politics that remain armed."

Democrats said the Socialists were to blame for dithering on the appointment of an interior minister this week and for misleading statements about the outcome of the referendum.

The main issue in Sunday's run-offs will be whether the Socialists and allied parties gain a two-thirds majority in the 155-seat assembly to enable them to amend post-Communist legislation.

Early results gave 49 seats to the Socialists, to eight for Mr. Berisha's Democrats, and they stand to win a further 20 seats in proportional voting for party lists.

The election had been widely seen as judgement on Mr. Berisha's years in power. Initially praised by the West for market reforms, he was later criticised for authoritarian measures.

Many Albanians blamed him for the collapse this year of four pyramid invest-

ment schemes in which thousands of people had sunk their life savings. More than 1,500 people were killed in the ensuing violence across Europe's poorest country.

Several Berisha stalwarts were defeated in the first round while others face tough run-off battles. With the south, focal point of the rebellion, voting solidly against the president, most contests are in the north of the mountainous country.

Former Democratic Prime Minister Alexander Meksi, ousted in March when the current multi-party government was appointed, faces a Socialist in Tirana and Ali Fatos Beja, a top Berisha adviser, is contesting another Tirana seat.

In Kavaje, southwest of the capital, two veteran Democrats face second-round battles. Party leader Shehu Tritan takes on a member of the anti-Berisha Rightist Union while former Interior Minister Halit Shamata is up against a Socialist.

Karachi power corporation chief shot dead

KARACHI (AFP) — Unidentified gunmen Saturday shot dead the head of the state-run Karachi Electricity Supply Corporation (KESC), Malik Shahid Hamid, in this troubled Pakistani city, police said.

Mr. Hamid, a former home secretary in the Sindh provincial government, was ambushed on his way to his office in an official car, they said.

His driver and guard were also killed by shots from Kalashnikov assault rifles by gunmen in a car, the police said.

He was the first senior official to be killed in a current wave of violence in Pakistan's largest city, where according to police 241 people, including 61 political activists, have been killed in the past four months.

The attack on Mr. Hamid in the Giza Area came about 30 minutes after another ambush of a police mobile van only a few kilometers away in the Durrani area, killing two policemen and injuring another two, police said.

It was unclear whether the two attacks involved the same gunmen.

Bhutto's husband, 18 others plead not guilty in murder case

KARACHI (AFP) — Asif Ali Zardari, husband of former Pakistani Premier Benazir Bhutto, and 18 others were formally indicted here Saturday for involvement in the murder of Ms. Bhutto's brother, Mr. Murtaza.

At a court hearing held in jail for security reasons, Mr. Zardari and the others accused all pleaded not guilty after an indictment was read out accusing them of conspiracy leading to Murtaza's killing.

The accused in the highly publicised case include police and intelligence officials, among them, former Intelligence Bureau Chief Masoud Sharif and former City Police Chief Shabbir Siddique.

The court, headed by District and Sessions Judge Shah Nawaz Awan, set the trial to start on July 19 in Karachi's Central Prison.

Murtaza, politically ambler last year, about three months before Ms. Bhutto, was ousted from power.

Learning on a stick because of spinal problems, Mr. Zardari told reporters afterwards "I am innocent."

"They (the government) have jailed me for no crime. They want to harass and mentally torture me, but I am not afraid," he said.

Mr. Zardari was detained the day Ms. Bhutto was sacked in November by President Farooq Ahmed Leghari for the alleged misuse and corruption of her government.

"These are acts of terrorism," a senior police official told AFP as the daytime raids spread fear in the smart heavily-guarded districts, which have foreign consulates and residences of diplomats.

Mr. Hamid became KESC chief in 1996 after previously heading the provin-

officials said.

On Friday the Karachi police chief, Malik Iqbal, termed the law and order situation alarming, but told a news conference the city's 23,000-man police force would be able to control the violence.

Mr. Iqbal did not explain factors underlying the unrest, but officials have attributed the violence to tensions between the MQM and its splinter group and to terrorism and criminal "mafias" operating in Karachi.

MQM, representing the city's large settler Mohajir community of immigrants from India after the partition of the sub-continent in 1947, is a partner in Sindh's ruling coalition, led by Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's party.

During former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's rule in Pakistan from 1993 until November 1996, more than 2,000 people were killed in Karachi in ethnic, religious and political violence.

MQM remained at loggerheads with Ms. Bhutto over alleged discrimination against the Mohajir community, blamed in turn by her for terrorism and violence in her home Sindh province.

Jet attacks by Taleban, opposition highlight Afghan power struggle

KABUL (AFP) — Deadly air power was flexed again in the struggle between the Taleban and their northern rivals causing 95 casualties in raids this weekend, sources said Saturday.

In a night raid Friday, opposition jets dropped two bombs on the Taleban-controlled Kabul Airport, in which at least three military personnel were reported killed and two others were wounded.

"One bomb exploded near the Air Force Political Department, the other a bit further away," Taleban guards told AFP.

They reported that the runway was not damaged and the airport was functioning as normal. Both foreign and Afghan civil aircraft use Kabul Airport as do Taleban jets and military helicopters.

Pakistan, a traditional supporter of the Taleban government, announced Saturday it had "temporarily" recalled all diplomats and staff from its consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan.

Ethnic Uzbek General Abdul Malik informed Pakistan's consulate general he could "no longer guarantee security" for them in Mazar-i-Sharif and they be "temporarily withdrawn."

until security conditions improved.

Fresh fighting broke out shortly after a senior Pakistani Foreign Office official, Ifkhar Murshid, who visited Mazar-i-Sharif last Tuesday on a mission to mediate between the warring sides, reported on his return to Islamabad that the two remained "far apart."

As ares of scarlet anti-aircraft fire cut through the night sky Friday, seven incandescent parachute flares were dropped by the lead jet, apparently to mark the target for the following second attacker.

The bombers were believed to have been Russian-made Sukhoi SU-22 jets flown from a northern air base under the joint control of Gen. Malik and Commander Ahmad Shah Masood.

Mr. Masood heads the military wing of ex-President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government ousted from Kabul by the Islamic militia in September 1996. Mr. Rabbani, Gen. Malik and the Shiite Hezbi-Wahdat faction compose the northern anti-Taleban alliance.

Friday night's jet attack came within minutes of a warning broadcast on a foreign radio service by Gen.

Malik's spokesman General Homayoon Fauzi, that opposition jets would target "military bases" in Kabul and other Taleban-controlled cities.

The previous opposition jet attack on Kabul — also at night — came about three weeks ago. No military casualties were reported but some civilian houses were believed to have been hit.

Earlier Friday Taleban jets bombed Maimana, the capital of Gen. Malik's western Fariab province, where Taleban prisoners-of-war were reportedly among the huge numbers killed and wounded.

In a radio interview Gen. Fauzi told foreign journalists that 90 Taleban prisoners were killed by Taleban jets.

Among the wounded were said to be at least two high-ranking Islamic movement officials — former Taleban Foreign Minister Mullah Mohammad Ghaus, and Taleban Civil Aviation Minister Maulavi Mohammad Mansoor.

In the Taleban jet raid Gen. Fauzi claimed bombs exploded behind the main Maimana mosque at the time of congregational prayers, a hospital, and the central jail where a large number of Muslim militants were interned.

The release of prisoners-of-war is one of the key issues put forward by the Taleban as a precondition for a ceasefire.

Thousands of Islamic militants were captured in northern Afghanistan last May when would-be ally Gen. Malik who defected to their side for four days, then joined forces again with Hezbi-Wahdat and turned on the Taleban.

A military stalemate exists on the frontlines north of Kabul, but continued fighting is reported in northern Afghanistan where the opposition coalition is battling the Taleban for control of Kunduz.

The last surviving contingents of Taleban in the north after Gen. Malik's return to the opposition alliance, are in Kunduz and Baghlan City 75 kilometres to the south.

The Kunduz militants have not only steadfastly held out against the opposition but also initiated infantry offensives. In Baghlan the Taleban, have been taken under the protective custody of local Commander Bashir.

Spokesmen for the northern alliance have said their programme was to "clean-up the north" and that no military moves were planned against Kabul.

1 Timor rebel killed, 14 captured by Indonesians

JAKARTA (R) — One rebel was killed and 14 captured after a shoot-out between Indonesian troops and armed guerrillas resisting Jakarta's rule in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, the official Antara news agency reported Saturday.

East Timor army chief Colonel Slamet Sidiabutar was quoted as saying Friday the guerrillas were followers of David Alex, believed to have been the second in command of about 200 rebels, who died after being captured on June 25.

"We have captured 14 of about 20 (rebels) who are followers of David Alex at 0925 hours, Thursday," Col. Sidiabutar was quoted as saying.

Some Indonesian newspaper reports published Saturday also quoted Col. Sidiabutar as saying the clash occurred Wednesday.

Army officials were not immediately available to explain the discrepancy.

Col. Sidiabutar said the army, acting on a tip from locals, surrounded a rebel hideout near Curusa village in the Baucau regency, about 130 kilometres east of the capital Dili.

A shoot-out ensued and the rebels retreated to the forest. A soldier, Private First Class Rafael Dos Santos, was wounded in the clash. Col. Sidiabutar said.

Those arrested confessed to being members of Alex's group, he added.

The Indonesian military said Alex died on the operating table at the Dili Military Hospital on June 25. He had been shot twice after a firefight near Baucau, while five others were captured unharmed.

Family members have questioned the circumstances of his death because he was quickly buried by the military, without full notification and participation of the victim's family.

Alex was believed to have been fighting as part of Falintil, the armed wing of the East Timor pro-independence Fretilin movement, which has opposed Jakarta's rule since the 1975 invasion of the territory by Indonesian forces.

Indonesia annexed East Timor in 1976 and regards it as its 27th province. The United Nations has never recognised the move and still regards Portugal as the administering power.

Indian premier's party splits; rebels launch new group

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's Janata Dal Party split Saturday but it posed no threat to his two-month-old coalition government, party sources said.

Supporters of party President Laloo Prasad Yadav declared the formation of a breakaway group, which they named Rashtriya (National) Janata Dal, the sources said. Mr. Yadav had led a boycott of the party's presidential election ballot Thursday.

The rebels of the Janata Dal, which heads India's ruling 15-party United Front Coalition, passed a resolution after efforts by senior party leaders to avert a split failed.

"Keeping in mind the mandate to promote social justice and secularism and to strengthen the country's unity and integrity, this convention renames Janata Dal as the National Janata Dal," the resolution said.

Mr. Yadav, chief minister of the populous eastern state of Bihar, alleged that the voter list in the election had been rigged in favour of his leadership challenger, Sharad Yadav, no relative of

his but also a fellow low-caste leader.

Results of Thursday's balloting are expected Sunday.

Despite the split, Mr. Gujral's government remained secure as Mr. Yadav has announced that his group would under no circumstance withdraw support for Mr. Gujral.

Mr. Laloo Yadav's differences are mainly with former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, who Mr. Yadav's supporters say played an unfair role in an effort to dislodge their leader.

Mr. Gujral has not publicly taken sides in the leadership battle and is believed to be neutral.

"There is no danger to the government. If the prime minister is ever in trouble, then Laloo Yadav will be the first to jump up and help him," the party president said Friday.

Janata Dal has 45 lawmakers in the 545-seat lower house, Lok Sabha, in which the United Front has an overall 178 members, most of whom belonging to regional groups or leftist allies.

Mr. Yadav's support base is believed to be at least 16

members, and his supporters put the figure at 24.

The ruling coalition's life-breath is the Congress Party, India's oldest political machine, whose 140 deputies offer make-or-break support to the government in an axis formed to keep out the Hindu Nationalists, who control 194 votes.

Mr. Gujral became prime minister in April after the Congress forced Mr. Deve Gowda's government to fall and renewed support to the coalition on condition it changed its leader.

Mr. Laloo Yadav is also embroiled in a \$280-million "fodder" scandal, in which the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has indicted him among 36 politicians and officials named in alleged embezzlement of state animal welfare funds.

Mr. Yadav says he is innocent, and alleges that the CBI is helping his political rivals. He has refused to resign as Bihar's chief minister and face trial on corruption charges.

Senior Janata Dal leaders have been worried by the loss of image which is believed to have resulted from the scandal.

Greenpeace to push into Asia and oppose oil growth

AMSTERDAM (R) — Greenpeace said Friday it planned to expand into Southeast Asia and to increase pressure on the oil industry to cease further worldwide exploration.

Delivering the organisation's 1996 Annual Report, Executive Director Thilo Bode said Greenpeace's own development and successes were encouraging, but climate change and primary forest destruction continued largely unabated.

Greenpeace would continue to devote its attention to these two related problems, he said.

He also said Greenpeace recognised the need to expand its global presence with an office in Southeast Asia, in either Thailand or India.

Greenpeace opened an office in Hong Kong last year in what it describes as a first step towards planting the organisation in China.

"Greenpeace has to organise globally," Mr. Bode said.

The organisation hopes to match some of its successes in Latin America, such as in Argentina where its supporter base rose by 40,000 last year.

However, Mr. Bode acknowledged the "move east" could not be a simple expansion of current activities: it would necessitate new approaches suited to the cultural conditions.

"This presents us with a new challenge: How to export our successes to such regions, without making the mistake of dictating to people, of presuming we know best," Greenpeace said in its annual report.

Mr. Bode suggested confrontational tactics used in the West might not be suited to Southeast Asia and China.

"We have to show these people we can help them," he said.

However, Campaign Director John Hince said low-key demonstrations in such countries, by virtue of their rarity, could attract much more attention than in the West.

"Confrontation has tended to be our best strategy," he said.

One area where Greenpeace expects some confrontation, as well as discussions, is in its strengthened attack on the fossil fuels industries.

"We'll have a particular focus on the oil companies... We call for an im-

mediate halt to exploration of coal and oil and to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy," Mr. Hince said.

He acknowledged Greenpeace's aims were ambitious.

"It's an enormous undertaking. (Fossil fuel companies) are among the most powerful the world has ever known," he said.

Greenpeace said it has already had discussions with senior management of oil giant Royal Dutch/Shell RD Assheton L., but while Shell appeared to recognise the issue of global warming, Greenpeace said it had secured no commitment to downscale exploration activities.

"Shell's corporate plan continues to allow them to find every last barrel of oil in the world and to burn it," Mr. Hince said.

Despite a worsening environmental picture in 1996, Greenpeace said it had achieved a number of advances with its campaigns and particularly welcomed the signing in September 1996 of the comprehensive test ban treaty by the five main nuclear powers.

Most oil from Tokyo Bay spill cleaned up

TOKYO (R) — Japan's coastguard said the 340 ships it mobilised to clean up the Tokyo Bay oil spill had recovered most of the slick but that it was not clear whether the operation would be finished by the end Friday.

"We have recovered a bulk of the oil spill," a coastguard spokesman said.

"We want to finish the operation today. But it is not clear whether we can finish it by the end of the today," he said.

The operation was picking up speed with the arrival of Japan's foremost oil-cleaning ship, the Transport Ministry's 3,500-tonne Seiryu-Maru, coastguard officials said.

The Seiryu-Maru, with a capacity to suck up 1,000 tonnes of a mixture of oil and seawater an hour, is leading the fleet of 340 ships, including coastguard patrol boats, fire-fighting ships, tugs, fishing boats and smaller oil-sucking vessels.

The Japanese-operated supertanker Diamond Grace

struck a well-marked undersea reef Wednesday, rupturing one of its 14 oil storage holds and spilling about 1,300 tonnes of crude oil into Tokyo Bay.

The 259,999 deadweight-tonne Panamanian-registered tanker, a Very Large Crude Carrier (VLCC), was carrying 257,000 tonnes of crude oil from the United Arab Emirates to a refinery in Kawasaki, south of Tokyo.

By Friday, what was one large oil slick had mixed with sea water and thinned out. It has broken up into three parts mostly between Kawasaki and Kimizu, cities on either end of the narrow neck of Tokyo Bay, the coastguard said.

Captain Hidenori Tsunemitsu told coastguard investigators he slowed down the ship to avoid colliding with another tanker and some fishing boats when his ship started drifting on the current and wind and scraped the clearly marked undersea reef, the coastguard spokesman said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1971

مجلس التحرير يترأسه السيد محمد عبد الله النور

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Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Hittin bells ring in July

WHILE THE fourth of July is generally recognised throughout the world as United States independence day, the Arabs rarely mark that date. On Saturday, July 4th, 1187, Muslim forces commanded by Sultan Salaheddin defeated the Crusader army at the Battle of Hittin or "the Horns of Hittin," two small hillocks on the plain west of Lake Tiberias. The Muslims were fresh and rested and well-placed in defensive positions. The Crusader troops, which outnumbered the Muslims, were exhausted after a forced march and were ordered to attack by incompetent officers.

For the Crusaders, who were commemorating the fourth as the "Feast of St. Martin," this disaster was the beginning of the end of their domination of Palestine and the Levant coast. The Muslim victory precipitated the expulsion of the Crusaders from Palestine and the liberation of Al Quds. The Battle of Hittin 810 years ago was a battle from which Western Christendom never recovered. Within three months the whole of the Levant coast, from Beirut to Gaza, was in the hands of Salaheddin. The Battle of Hittin was a major turning point in the history of the Middle East.

On the 5th Salaheddin took the nearby castle of Tiberias. And on Wednesday the 8th he captured Acca and performed Friday prayers in the mosque which the Crusaders had converted into a church.

But these deeds did not equal his capture of Al Quds on October 2nd, which coincided with the 27th of Rajab, Al Lailat Al Miraj, when the Prophet Mohammed made his mystical pilgrimage to heaven from the mount of the Holy City.

Nothing became Salaheddin as did his merciful treatment of the Crusaders residing in the city. In spite of their duplicity and refusal to honour their commitments, they were allowed to depart in peace. They had shown no mercy to the Muslims and the Orthodox Christians when they conquered the city in 1099. While the European Roman Catholic Crusaders had slaughtered the Muslims and persecuted and expelled the native Orthodox Christians, the Muslims encouraged them to return where they were granted their rights in full, creating a pluralistic partnership which endures today to face the new crusade waged against the Arabs in Palestine and elsewhere. The Netanyahu government should be aware of history. It has to ask itself the question of whether it wants to be the leader of this crusade, which it might also lead on behalf of those Western Christians who are still smarting from their defeat at the "Horns of Hittin."

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

NOW THAT Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other Arab states have expressed the intention to boycott the Doha economic summit, it is perhaps in the interest of the Arab countries in general and Qatar, the host country, in particular to postpone, if not cancel, the meeting which was scheduled for November this year, said Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer for Al Ra'i Saturday. The Qatari leaders have heard the United States demanding that Israel be invited, like other Arab states, to attend the Doha summit, and Qatar has subsequently consented, sending invitations to all states which had attended the previous three summits, noted the writer. But it is clear that inviting Israel under the present circumstances, in which the Jewish state maintains its repressive actions against the Palestinians and scoffs at the peace accords, is bound to further deepen splits among Arab countries, he pointed out. It is clear that Qatar wants the summit participants to discuss economic development in the region, but such development requires stability, security and peace, something which is lacking at the moment because of Israel's policies, he added. The writer said that Qatar was persuaded to organise the summit because it was told that it would be part of the peace process, but that process has been dead for some time, thanks to the Netanyahu government's policies and its continued occupation of Arab territories, said the writer. He suggested that Qatar freeze the summit until circumstances allow the Arab states to attend it.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT in Jordan was the focus of attention of a writer for Al Dustour who expressed the view that Jordanians investments are more sustainable and more beneficial for the country. Mohammad Daoud said that while Jordan welcomes foreign investors who bring in capital for the various projects, one must realise that under the present laws, which give incentives to the foreigners, capital and profit might fly out at any moment, at the appearance of any sign of dissatisfaction or tension in the region. It is true that many Jordanians are discouraged from investing in projects and prefer to keep their savings in the banks or take them abroad for safety, but this situation is the result of past experiences, when the shareholding companies were mismanaged, leading to collapse or heavy losses, he noted. The writer said national capital is more likely to grow if it is well managed and if shareholding companies are free from corruption. He said that savings by Jordanians should be encouraged in the direction of income-generating projects; and if these are successful, major capital holders will be encouraged to return their huge capital to Jordan for local investment.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Growing GDP and dropping living standards are not incompatible

THERE IS a structural phenomenon that should be comprehended and taken into account as a condition for understanding the social consequences of the economic adjustment programme. The phenomenon is that a high rate of growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) does not necessarily mean a corresponding improvement in the population's standard of living.

It is quite possible that the GDP experience a real growth rate of 5.6 per cent in a given year, while the standard of living, measured by the volume of private consumption, drops by 4.6 per cent, in the same year, something that happened in 1993, for example, reflecting a 10 per cent gap.

This extraordinary phenomenon could not be explained by the high population growth rate alone. This growth is responsible for only 3 percentage points.

The question is why does the per capita private consumption, in real terms, decline in a period when the annual economic growth rate ranges between 5.2 per cent (1996), and 8.1 per cent (1994), and the average growth rate during ten years, 1993-2002, is 6.5 per cent, according to the estimates and forecasts of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)?

The answer to this puzzle is that the implementation of an economic adjustment programme inevitably leads to a set of desired structural changes in the allocation of resources, including curbing private consumption. This is what is usually labelled as austerity or compulsory saving.

The economic adjustment programme aims at reducing private consumption from 71.3 per cent of GDP in 1993 to 57.1 per cent in 2002. This means that eco-

nomic growth does not necessarily result in a higher standard of living. Such growth may be accompanied by a lower share of private consumption. The resources are thus diverted to other purposes, such as the accommodation of population growth, capital formation and foreign debt repayment.

If everything goes according to the programme, private savings will triple from 5.9 per cent of the GDP in 1993 to 18.1 per cent in 2002. This saving is not all voluntary; part of it will come about due to higher indirect taxes which reduce the purchasing power. The proceeds of the extra taxes go to repay public debt or government investment.

If the scenario of reform comes true, as planned by the current IMF economic adjustment programme, the GDP will rise during the coming six years, 1997-2002, by an annual average of 6.5 per cent, while the standard of living will improve by 0.5 per cent only, 3 percentage points will be taken by population growth and 3 percentage points will go to savings, which, in turn, will be used to finance capital formation and/or debt retirement.

Economic reform and overcoming the indebtedness crisis have a social cost. The false prosperity in the eighties, which was financed by borrowing, is being paid for in the nineties. This is a compulsory but justified sacrifice. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

People complain that their standard of living is declining, while our officials claim that the national economy is healthy and growing. Both are right. If one doubts the truth in these contradicting claims, then perhaps this column would help them.

Mexico: The search for a Gorbachev

By Gwynne Dyer

ON SUNDAY, for the first time since 1929, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) will lose control of the lower house of the Mexican Congress. In a parallel mayoral election in Mexico City, it is likely to lose control of the capital city as well. And then we shall find out what President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon is really made of.

Zedillo is the 'mild-mannered accountant' who was catapulted into the Mexican presidency when the candidate whose campaign he was managing, Luis Donaldo Colosio, was assassinated in 1994. Now, almost half-way through his six-year term, he has shown himself a tough, capable manager in restoring Mexico's credit and its battered economy. But Zedillo has yet to prove that he is what Mexico really needs: a Gorbachev.

Ten years ago, any comparison between Mexico and the old Soviet Union would have seemed ludicrous: what has a global superpower got in common with a Latin American one-party state, even a very big one? But those who used to call the Soviet Union "the Third World with rockets" had a point, and now the analogy seems quite reasonable.

Now, stripped of its empire, Russia is a country of only 150 million people, half of them living on or below the poverty line. Perhaps two-thirds of Mexico's 100 million people live in similar circumstances, and the average level of education is certainly lower. But the prime task for both countries is the same: managing the transition from a generations-old system of tyranny to a modern democratic

society.

The old Communist Party of the Soviet Union controlled every aspect of life in that vast domain for 74 years. The PRI, though it lacked the rigid dogmas and disciplines of high-tide Communism, has controlled every aspect of Mexican life for almost as long.

The PRI became Mexico's ruling party in 1929, after two decades of revolution and civil war, and it held the presidency, both houses of Congress, and all 31 state governorships until 1989. It was such an efficient power machine that Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa once called it "the perfect dictatorship."

Opposition parties were legalised in the 70s, but the PRI's proven formula of corruption, fraud and total control of the media kept the forces of change at bay. When Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of the left-wing Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) seemed to be winning the 1988 presidential election, the computers "crashed" until the count could be adjusted in favour of the PRI candidate. Even now, only four state governors belong to the opposition.

But Mexico has changed. It has joined the global economy, a third of its population has middle-class incomes and expectations, and its mass media have opened up to the world. The old system is no longer sustainable, and the question is whether the transition can be achieved without massive violence and collapse.

Many doubt it. Last year Mexican writer Carlos Monsivais wrote: "This is the gravest moment in Mexico that I can remember. The government doesn't have any credibility, nor

do the political parties. The economy is in disarray. Dependence on the United States is extraordinary. There is guerrilla violence in several states. There is discouragement, there is fear."

Not much of this has changed in the past year. The economy is still crawling out of the hole it fell into after a mismanaged devaluation in late 1994 led to a halving of the peso's value and a general financial meltdown. Inflation is now falling and economic growth has resumed, but millions are still unemployed.

The guerrillas, few in number but adroit in their use of the media, have suspended operations during the election, but they have not gone away. Last August 737 of Mexico's senior police officers, 17 per cent of the total, were dismissed because they lacked "the required ethical profile", but the other four-fifths of corrupt senior policemen still have their jobs. There has been much talk of change, but little change — except in the electoral system.

The strongest evidence that Zedillo is a closet Gorbachev is what has happened to Mexican electoral law since his election. First, Zedillo pushed through a law granting all Mexican political parties generous campaign funding tied to their share of the popular vote in the last election. Previously, the only party with money was PRI, but now it's a much more equal race: PRI has \$112 million for the campaign, but the conservative National Action Party (PAN) has \$66 million, and the PRD has \$49 million.

And for the first time in modern history, Zedillo is letting the mayor of Mexico City (which con-

tains one-fifth of Mexico's population and over half its money) be elected by popular vote. He cannot seriously believe that the PRI will win that election — which suggests that he does understand the need to dismantle the power monopoly of his own party in the broader national interest.

What will actually happen in the vote this Sunday? The PRI will almost certainly lose its existing majority (302 out of 500 seats) in the lower house of Congress. This will transform Mexico's entrenched political psychology of despair in a single stroke.

It will not make the country ungovernable, however, because the conservative PAN broadly supports Zedillo's free-market reforms. PAN President Felipe Calderon has made it clear that he is open to a PAN-PRI alliance or coalition in Congress.

PRD leader Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, cheated of victory in the 1988 presidential election, will certainly become mayor of Mexico City. That will put him in an ideal high-profile position from which to make another run at the presidency in 2000. And then, if he wins, the PRI will finally have lost power — with even less violence than attended the end of Communist power in the old Soviet Union.

If Zedillo really is the "transitional leader" Mexico needs, then he can expect little thanks in the short term. They are not putting up statues in gratitude to Mikhail Gorbachev in Russia. They haven't even put up any statues yet to Adolfo Suarez, the man who managed the transition from fascism to democracy in Spain. But it is one of the greatest services a man can do for his country.

Defactonomics

The spirit and tempo of economic liberalisation need to be kept up

By Dr. Tayseer Abdel Jabber

IT IS quite encouraging to note that the Jordanian government has taken, for the last two months, clear economic measures to further liberalise the economy. Until early 1990s, we used to claim that Jordan was the most liberal economy in the region. However, things are changing very fast in neighbouring countries which, all, aim at improving their competitiveness, especially in attracting foreign investments. Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, in particular, and to a certain extent Syria, have been on the move to speedily liberalise their economies and investment climate.

The delay in introducing more liberal measures had adversely affected Jordan's competitiveness. Previous governments were more concerned with other immediate issues, such as the peace process, the sales tax law and parliamentary elections. Moreover, the mood was influenced by traditional columnists who did not accurately conceive the drastic change and openness in the world economy. Their views somewhat prevailed for a few years and the cost was high.

Now, the present government is taking bold steps in different areas. One area is liberalising prices, in the context of restructuring the Ministry of Supply. Prices of fruits and vegetables are now left entirely to the market forces. The government is no longer bound to subsidise local wheat and barley production. Prices of many other commodities are also liberalised. In few months, the food coupons will be scrapped and replaced by a more targeted money allowance to the poor.

Another major area of liberalisation relates to foreign investments. The

government has lifted the 50 per cent ceiling on foreign ownership in many sectors. I was among those who have called for this change two years ago when the new investment regulations were introduced. Foreign investors can fully own (100 per cent) projects in industry (which was earlier permitted) and in new sectors, namely, land and air transport, banks, insurance, communications, agriculture and investments in the Amman Financial Market.

Privatisation is a third major area which the government has activated, and more concrete steps are expected to be undertaken.

The Central Bank has finally moved to join the liberalisation process. Though no Jordanian or foreign investor was complaining of foreign exchange controls, it is helpful that the Central Bank announced last week the full liberalisation of the foreign exchange system, not only in current actions transaction, which has been liberalised since 1995, but also in capital transactions. Residents and non residents alike can transfer to and out of Jordan any amount in Jordanian dinars, or any other foreign currency, without the need for prior approval. Thanks to money changers, this was always the case for the bulk of clients wishing to do so. However, the move is favourable and it will be observed by foreign banks, investment companies and portfolios interested in Jordan and the region.

These liberalisation measures address the long-term prospects of the Jordanian economy. We need to keep up the spirit and tempo of economic liberalisation.

LETTERS

Peace must reign for all

To the Editor:

IT IS frustrating to witness the outright racism conducted in the land of Palestine by the Jews who have been subjected to similar practices mainly by the Europeans.

Palestine, and the history of this region, mainly of Levant, Mesopotamia and Egypt amply proves that, was never the Jews'.

Peace is the only way to fight racism and militarism in Israel. It is obvious, though, that the Israelis, under the cover of a false religious claim, use their own security demand as the basis of everything to come, making our security in Jordan, in Palestine and in Lebanon count for nothing; the area seems to be left for ever in turmoil, simply because certain religious groups feel the divine right to claim what is not theirs and steal other peoples' lands, resources, dignity. And to top it all, they demand to be treated normally and with respect.

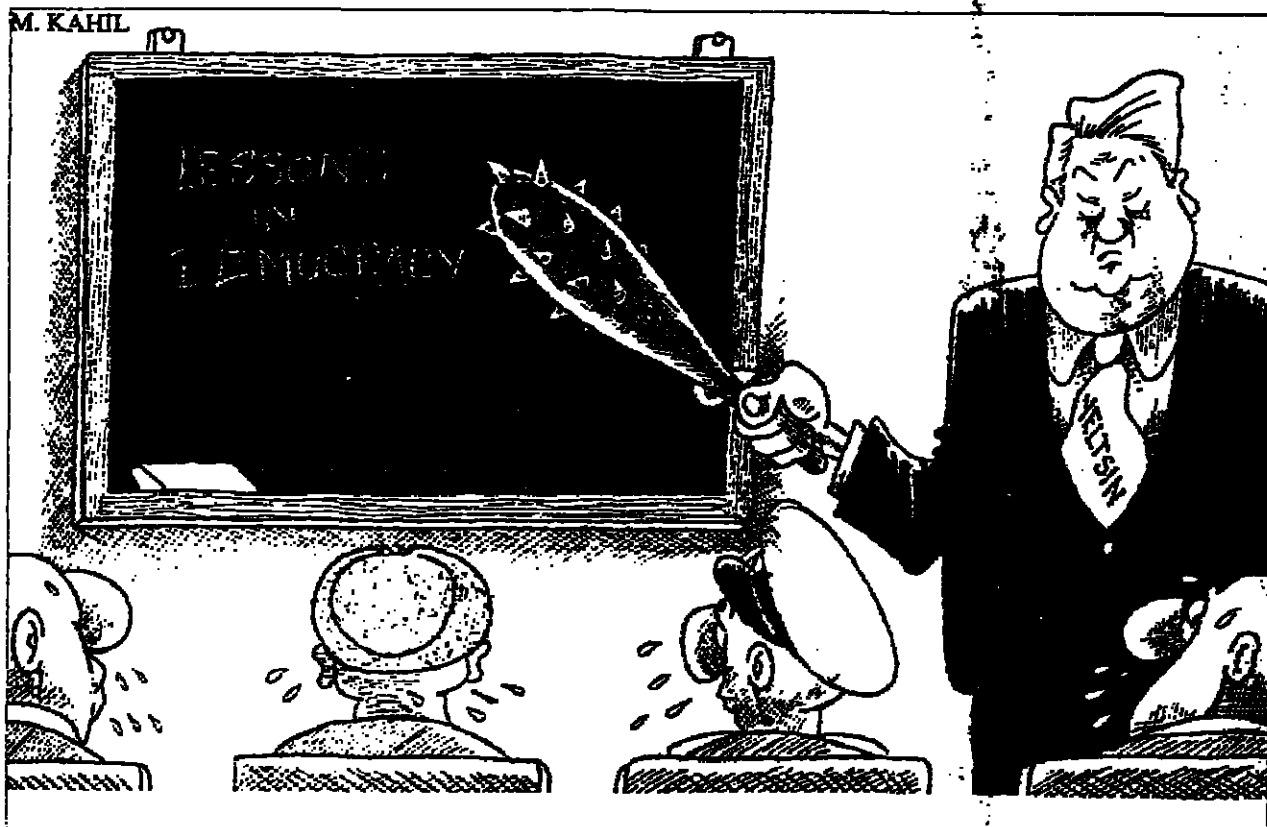
Respect comes with difficulty for Israelis and Washington, whose diplomats are clearly supporting such a racist, selfish group of immigrants who have given themselves the right to steal, kill, lie and deceive.

The American leaders and their embassies in this area should not accept to go against the American founding fathers' principles.

We all support peace, and we all expect to be treated with dignity. So the struggles for a secular Palestine, a place where all human beings are treated equally, a place similar to what is called today the U.S., will be supported.

Hazem Malhas,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and, preferably, address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.



Gdansk marks 1,000 years, fears for future

By Ryszard Wesolowski
Reuters

GDANSK, Poland — Gdansk, where World War II began and Communism crumbled, starts its first 1,000 years this month amid gnawing anxiety over the next millennium.

Among the crowds at summer-long concerts and spectacles in the Baltic coast city may be some of the thousands of workers idled from the bankrupt Gdansk shipyard, where Lech Walesa led the Solidarity Union to challenge Communism's grip in 1980.

Gdansk's splendid architecture, lovingly restored from wartime devastation, recalls a past as a cosmopolitan Hanseatic port so rich it spiked its liquor with flakes of gold, nurtured great thinkers and stamped marks on world history.

But city leaders fear that without rapid investment, especially in a major highway south into Europe, the port at the mouth of the Vistula River could become a faded backwater.

"If we don't manage this, we will become a city confined to the fringes of Poland and Europe," said Gdansk council chief Pawel Adamowicz.

"The shipyard's problems are just the tip of the iceberg... After 50 years of Communism, the city is neglected through a lack of vital infrastructure development," he said.

"Obviously the magnificent 1,000-year past of Gdansk cannot automatically be transferred to the present and our future looks like it could be hard," Mr. Adamowicz added in an interview.

Gdansk's nemesis is the more westerly port of Szczecin, which not only has a flourishing shipyard but also stands to benefit from being nearer Germany's future capital

Berlin. Unless Gdansk can attract the A1 highway project and investment to clinch its claim on Baltic trade with Scandinavia, its loss to Szczecin could soon be irreversible.

Despite Gothic spires, a rich contemporary cultural scene and 470,000 inhabitants, Gdansk's quiet streets and tawdry high-rise hotel already have a provincial feel.

But the port, where three vast crosses in front of the shipyard honour the martyrs of 1970 protests against Communist repression, inspires strong loyalty in its inhabitants, although most have lived there less than half a century.

"Gdansk is my beloved city. I couldn't imagine living anywhere else in the world and I have seen a fair bit of it," said the former electrician Walesa, who as Polish president from 1990-1995 returned every weekend he could to Gdansk.

"I hope the next 1,000 years of Gdansk will not be so full of the dramas and tragedies it has undergone especially in this century — I mean the tragedy of World War II's outbreak and of the workers who died in 1970," Mr. Walesa said.

Historical city

Gdansk's current celebrations mark its first mention in writing in 997, as the "Urbs Gyddanzyc" visited by the missionary St. Adalbert that year, and its rapid growth into a flourishing trade centre — the cosmopolitan port of Danzig.

Set in a Kaszubian Slav hinterland, long loyal to Poland's kings while speaking German and boasting a flourishing Jewish community, it had Dutch, Scandinavian and Scottish citizens.

Danzig gained lustre from the great names of astronomer Jan Hevelius, philosopher Arthur

Schopenhauer, and the inventor of the thermometer Daniel Fahrenheit.

Between the first and second world wars Danzig was made a so-called free city which became an enclave of German Nazism.

The arrival of the German warship Schleswig-Holstein in 1939 to shell Poland's westernmost outpost off Gdansk, bravely defended by its garrison, marked the start of World War II.

After the war Gdansk fell to Poland and much of the German-speaking population fled or was deported, to be replaced by poles expelled from eastern lands annexed by the Soviet Union. Most of the Jews had been murdered by the Nazis.

So Gdansk is now overwhelmingly Polish, with only the novels of writers like Guenther Grass, a child of pre-war Danzig writing in German, and the younger Polish author Pawel Huelle left to recall its former vivid ethnic mix.

Anniversary events

But in the hunt for vital foreign investment, and in pride over the city's mercantile past as an international trade crossroads, Gdansk is summing the world to join its summer-long anniversary party.

The organisers, mindful of Gdansk's central role in the late mediaeval network of Baltic trading cities, has called a June rally of the "new Hansa", involving 200 coastal towns.

True to history, those festivities will be opened jointly by the presidents of Poland and Germany while the Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and King Harald of Norway have promised to attend, as may Britain's Prince Charles.

Recalling documented visits by English players

to the cultured centre, the city is also seeking funds to recreate its former Elizabethan-style theatre, first built 400 years ago.

Such events are aimed at symbolising the expansion of the European Union which Poland hopes to join soon after 2000.

On the night of July 5-6 the city's most famed tipple "goldwasser" — a sweet liqueur glittering with incredibly thin slices of the precious metal — star in a festival on the picturesque main street named after the holy Virgin Mary.

"World War II exploded here and due to the efforts of solidarity and Lech Walesa, Communism was toppled," said chief councillor Adamowicz, adding that this was only part of his essentially commercial city's story.

"Gdansk is a city for fine investments, where good deals can be done. This is the Gdansk we want to promote in Poland and around the world as we celebrate our millennium," Mr. Adamowicz said.

Two residents of Gdansk dressed in mediaeval attire hold Poland's ancient royal insignias during celebrations of the city's millennium. Gdansk's splendid architecture, lovingly restored from wartime devastation, recalls a past as a cosmopolitan Hanseatic port so rich it spiked its liquor with flakes of gold, nurtured great thinkers and stamped marks on world history (Reuters photo)



Children's eating fads — 'not just bloating with fat but also with power'

By Anne Karpf

WE HAVE had a national panic about the safety of food, and one about the safety of children, so it was not going to be long before they conjoined to produce a national panic about children and food. It duly arrived end of January, with the publication in Britain of a new study carried out for the Cancer Research Campaign, which claimed that today's children run a greater risk of cancer because they refuse to eat vegetables.

The proposed solution was novel: since children relish the various flavourings added to crisps, why not add them to frozen vegetables to produce prawn-cocktail flavoured carrots, or roast-beef-and-mustard flavoured broccoli? It may be a brave new world, but for the food manufacturers it is also a rewarding one.

This is not the first panic about children and food. But previous bursts of public anxiety were confined to Britain, and this is Europe-wide. There was recent alarm in France, for example, when McDonald's announced that one of its city branches was laying on a free bus service to shuttle out-of-town lycée schoolchildren in for a quick Big Mac during their lunch hour. And an Italian survey recently found that, veal aside, Italian children's food preferences are just as restricted as their British counterparts'. That vaunted, fêted Mediterranean diet is, it seems, being junked.

Although the current anxiety has a broader, more symbolic dimension, contemporary kids certainly have refined the art of fadism. There's one family in which the older child will eat only bow-shaped pasta and the younger refuses any but swirl-shapes. Hearing such tales I used to feel complacent: my children have never eaten a spoonful of commercially prepared baby food and have been fed exclusively on a wide range of fresh, home-made meals.

Nutritionally, I belong with the angels. But, alas, their adventurousness with food has not lasted, and my seven-year-old is a new recruit to the faddist ranks. What's more, inevitably, as a result of my zeal, her unattainable object of desire is a chicken nugget.

But our children's preferences and our anxiety over them are shaped by much more than individual hopes and tastes. Although eating seems like the most personal activity, it is actually one of the most culturally determined. My daughter can name every product that her friends eat regularly: when the gap between what a child and its peers eat is too great, the child feels conformity in food is as important as in clothes. Indeed, a study has shown that a child who prefers peas to carrots will, if seated with children who prefer carrots, choose carrots over peas, and after a few days will say that they actually prefer them.

Food has long been the site of power struggles between parents and children, but what has changed over the past 20 years has been the creation of a children's culinary ghetto. In traditional cultures children and adults eat the same food together, but in the West, kids have become a lucrative marketing niche, with products targeted entirely at them. Nursery food was always bland, but it was a variant of adult food; today's children occupy a cordoned-off zone of spaghetti hoops and turkey dinosaurs.

In some sense, this is fine: children use food to differentiate themselves from adults. Anthropologist Allison James has argued that



sweets — their ingredients, texture and the way they are eaten (put in the mouth, taken out, put in again) — blatantly violate the culture of adult eating. Indeed, children's culture inverts the rules of adults' culture: what we prize, they trash, and vice versa — all part of the great psycho-social separation from parents that children must engage in.

But the might of the food

buy them a food they had seen advertised on TV and, given their fabled "pester power," got it. Studies have shown that quite small children are ferociously brand loyal, with a remarkable memory for jingles.

All this is undeniable, but it is also true that many current fears are misplaced. The Cancer Research Campaign study was carried out among working-class fami-

lies, and yet a Mintel survey found that poor people were much less likely to worry about nutrition than rich. This is not because they are feckless, but because they have so much else to worry about: it is well documented now that eating healthily is dearer and is not an option for the poor — simply providing enough food for their children is their priority. As food researcher Suzi Leather has pointed out, convenience foods may be high in fat and sugar but they are predictable and entail less wastage — "if you are poor, you cannot afford mistakes." So the children of the middle class eat better but their parents worry more.

Whenever the subject of children and food is raised, women are in for blame. This time it has been hinted that, by acquiescing in their children's prohibitions and preferences, mothers have been morally lax: indeed,

fibre and moral fibre have become closely linked in the popular imagination — as if a deficiency of the latter has caused a deficit of the former. In fact, women are subjected to competing maternal ideologies: the good mother must maintain the family harmony and its health. Increasingly, we find ourselves unable simultaneously to do both.

When anxiety sweeps across the country like a Mexican wave, we can be sure it also carries broader concerns. A panic about the unhealthiness of our children's food, with its polarised imagery (pure children, impure food) expresses potent, if conflicting, fears about our world and the adulteration of our future. After air and water, food is the most important thing we ingest: our current anxiety speaks of the penetration of agribusiness into the heart of our children, polluting their very marrow with the Big C.

For more than a decade, health education campaigns have plied us with information about a healthy diet and, with the stamp of Thatcherism, urged us to exercise individual choice to become healthier: now our children are using that same touted choice to eat unhealthily. Middle-class families, eating organic to counter a sense of powerlessness in the face of an omnipotent food industry, finding themselves powerless in the face of children subsisting solely on Coco Pops and Hula Hoops. So the current panic also evokes images of children bloated not just with fat but also with power, an army of uncontrollable kids.

Guardian Weekly

"Food has long been the site of power struggles between parents and children, but what has changed over the past 20 years has been the creation of a children's culinary ghetto."

companies has changed the picture: food is now entertainment. Cartoon characters, already familiar to children from toys and television, saturate their daily meals; regularly used to market convenience foods to kids, "character licensing" is a billion-dollar industry. McDonald's set a trend in the 1960s, introducing the Ronald McDonald clown to help establish the company's dominance — especially, a senior vice-president of the company admitted recently, in countries that had no hamburger tradition.

Children's food is heavily advertised on television: one survey found that more than half of all advertisements during a week of children's television were for food and soft drinks (most laced with fat, sugar or both), eight times higher than for any other category, including toys. In another survey, 85 per cent of children had asked a parent to

Islamic council rejects abolishing ownership ceiling for foreigners

By Ghaila Alul
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Council of Islamic Organizations and Societies in Jordan rejected the recent government decision to abolish the non-Jordanian equity ownership ceiling in six sectors and described it as "illogical and publicly misunderstood."

According to a statement made available to the Jordan Times Saturday by the council, the government's decision "came at the time when most Jordanians' interest in investing at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) has weakened as a result of the decline in the value of shares."

"This would open the door for foreign investors to own local companies at very low prices thus denying Jordanians the right to secure fixed and steady resources," the statement said.

Hoping to increase the flow of foreign capital into Jordan, the government last week decided to remove the non-Jordanian equity ownership ceiling in the AFM, transportation, insurance, banking, telecommunications and agricultural sectors.

The construction, retail trading and metallurgy sectors were excluded from the decision, keeping the non-Jordanian equity ownership ceiling at 50 per cent.

The statement said the decision will allow foreign investors to control the management of Jordanian companies "in order to benefit other similar foreign

companies." "This decision will pave the way for foreign investors to make changes in the management of local companies that would possibly benefit other foreign companies or even other countries hostile to Jordan," the statement said.

Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs Jawad Anani told the Jordan Times Saturday that the government decided to remove the non-Jordanian equity ownership ceiling in order to encourage foreign investments in Jordan.

"The decision only included six sectors in which we want to encourage foreign investments," Dr. Anani said.

He said some Jordanian banks had exceeded the earlier 50 per cent ceiling, and lifting the ceiling would free these banks to adjust to the new situation.

In its statement, the council opposed the move towards opening up the economy citing as an example the "damages to the Egyptian economy as a result of the uncontrolled economic openness in that country."

"If the Jordanian government is strongly convinced that these economic measures will serve the national interest in the long and short terms it should explain their economic benefits to the people and not only to the affluent who only care for their private interests at the expense of the welfare of Jordanians," said the statement.

Yemen earns \$41m from tourism in '96

ADEN (R) — Yemen's tourism revenue rose to \$41 million in 1996, up from \$38 million the previous year, an official statement said. The statement, issued by the government's General Tourism Board, said the number of foreign tourists to Yemen increased to 74,000 compared with 60,000 in 1995.

It said the country, nestled between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden at the southern

tip of the Arabian Peninsula, currently had 421 hotels and hostels with 6,000 rooms. 4,500 of which offered "reasonable services." It did not elaborate.

Yemen, one of the Arab World's poorest countries, has recently suffered from a spate of tourist kidnappings by tribesmen seeking to put pressure on the government. The hostages, mostly from Europe and the United States, have all been released unharmed.

Egypt, Sudan top Arab recipients of '96 investment

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Egypt and Sudan were the most attractive for investment in the Arab World in 1996, receiving nearly 60 per cent of the total direct capital in the region, an Arab official said Saturday.

Direct Arab investment in Egypt stood at around \$771 million in 1996, nearly 33.7 per cent of the total private capital invested in the 22-member Arab League during the year, said Maumun Hassan, director general of the Kuwaiti-based Inter Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation (IIGC).

Sudan received around \$554 million, or 26.3 per cent of the total investment, Mr. Hassan told the United Arab Emirates economic weekly Al Iqtisadi.

He gave no reason for the surge in investment in Sudan, which has been battered by more than a decade of civil war in the south. His figures showed pri-

vate Arab investment in Sudan stood at only \$38.8 million in 1995, nearly 3.5 per cent of the total Arab capital.

Mr. Hassan said direct inter-Arab investment, mostly in agriculture, industry and infrastructure, soared by around 38.5 per cent to \$2.1 billion in 1996 from \$1.45 billion in 1995. This compares with an average \$500 million a year in early 1990s.

Most of the private Arab investments in 1996 were owned by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya and the UAE.

"There is a remarkable improvement in the investment climate in the Arab World, especially in members which are carrying out reforms," Mr. Hassan said. He said he had no figures on Arab investments abroad but independent estimates put them at between \$600 billion and \$800 billion.

GCC seen moving closer to unified tariff accord

DUBAI (R) — The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has agreed on tariff classifications for all but 36 commodities, moving a step closer to an elusive unified tariff agreement for the six-member alliance, a UAE newspaper has said.

Mohammad Ahmad Al Kait, a United Arab Emirates delegate at a recent GCC meeting, told the Gulf News he was optimistic the remaining disagreements could be resolved among members, which also include Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar.

The meeting in Riyadh last month was part of a continued bid to classify a total of over 1,000 goods and unify tariffs — a goal which has been blocked by disagreement among member states almost since the birth of the alliance in 1981.

"We feel the steady whittling down of contentious issues to a mere 36 is indicative of the fact that the common GCC goal of a unified tariff system is most certainly attainable," Mr. Al Kait

was quoted as saying. GCC states must classify commodities into three categories — those exempted from tariffs such as food and medicine, basic commodities with a tariff such as industrial goods and other commodities requiring a special tax to protect domestic industries.

Standard tariffs among GCC states range from four to 12 per cent, with special tariffs for some industries.

A GCC summit in December agreed to complete classification before the next summit in Kuwait in December this year.

"Kuwaiti felt the day was not far off when the GCC would have just one customs point, and that goods would travel safely through the borders with minimal bureaucracy and red tape," the Gulf News said.

The tariffs issue is a hurdle in the way of a free trade deal with the European Union which could open lucrative European markets to cheap petrochemicals and other goods from the Gulf.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7545	0.5822	1.4676	114.52	1.3742	1700.00	1.9750	5.9110
DE Mark	0.5700	-	0.3372	0.8363	65.27	0.7828	972.94	1.1254	3.3681
GB Sterling	1.6985	2.9584	-	2.4744	191.78	2.3203	2863.96	3.3348	9.9607
CH Franc	0.6614	1.1948	0.4031	-	78.02	0.9358	1163.09	1.3488	4.0252
JP Yen	0.0087	1.5307	0.5164	1.2803	-	1.2023	14.90	172.31	5.1570
CA Dollar	0.7277	1.2897	0.4347	1.0524	1.20	-	1226.66	1.4169	4.2438
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0266	0.3463	0.8859	1493.43	0.8127	-	11.56	3.4587
NL Guilder	0.5063	68.81	0.2396	74.30	58.59	0.6956	864.59	-	2.9937
FR Franc	0.1692	0.2968	0.1001	24.8224	19.56	0.2324	33.38	33.3800	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KRW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7080	3.7504	0.3770	3.6398	0.3022	3.6729	1535.50	3.3930
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	5.2972	0.5325	5.1410	0.4268	5.1877	2168.79	4.7924
GB Sterling	0.2666	0.1888	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0806	0.98	409.42	0.9047
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8780	9.9480	-	8.85	0.8015	9.74	4072.94	9.0000
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.8030	1.01	421.86	0.9322
Kuwait Dinar	3.3086	2.3432	12.4124	1.2477	12.65	-	12.16	5081.91	0.9322
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	1.0208	0.9910	0.8823	-	418.06	0.9238
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4611	2.4425	0.2455	2.3764	0.1968	2.3920	-	2.2097
Egyptian	0.2947	0.2087	1.1053	0.1111	1.0727	0.0891	1.0825	452.55	-

Energy		Unit	Price
Brent	18.46	18.06	
W. Tera	19.44	20.37	
Bonny	18.46	18.06	
Dubai	18.90	17.30	
UL Gas	182.00	183.00	

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4681	0.15791	0.39156	30.8504				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.47797	0.16125	0.39962	31.2071				
KW Dinar	3.3086	5.81395	1.96117	4.86145	379.507				
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.85549	1.57085	3.8956	304.044				
CY Pound	1.9287	3.3839	1.1416	2.8304	220.875				

Metal Prices			Unit	Price
Gold (oz's)	324.5	325		
Silver (oz's)	4.54	4.56		
Platinum (oz's)	419	422		
AL (3 Months)	1604	1608		
CU (3 Months)	2416	2421		
Zinc (3 Months)	1467	1471		
Lead (3 Months)	861	865		
NI (3 Months)	6960	6990		

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Period	1-3	3-6	6-9	9-12	1-3	3-6	6-9	9-12	Year
USD	5.58	5.89	5.75	5.90	6.00				
GBP	6.84	6.84	7.06	7.34	7.46				
JPY	0.44	0.62	0.55	0.46	0.68				
DEM	3.25	3.00	3.05	3.11	3.16				
FRF	3.22	3.27	3.33	3.30	3.41				
CHF	1.19	1.43	1.31	1.31	1.57				
ITL	6.80	6.72	6.82	6.48	6.35				

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls		
New York	DOW JONES	7895.81	100.43	1.29	7896.28	7796.97	7795.38		
New York	S&P 500	916.82	12.89	1.43	917.82	904.03	904.03		
London	FT-SE 100	4640.3	-17.6	-0.38	4652	4623.1	4657.9		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20523.75	-101.01	-0.49	20742.7	20523.8	20524.8		
Paris	CAC 40	2934.48	-2.5	-0.09	2946.78	2913.24	2936.88		
Frankfurt	DAX	3942.83	55.14	1.42	3945.68	3902.83	3887.39		

Energy			Unit	Price
Coffee (c/lbs)	186.83	Spot		
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1585	Spot		
Sugar (\$/ton)	325.5	Spot		
Wheat (\$/ton)	146.5	Spot		
Soya (c/lbs)	22.16	Spot		
Tea (c/lbs)	128	Spot		
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot		
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot		

JOD Cross Rates			
Currency	Buy	Sell	
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	1.1927	1.1987	
DE Mark	0.4027	0.4047	
CH Franc	0.4812	0.4835	
FR Franc	0.1197	0.1203	
JP Yen	0.6175	0.6206	
NL Guilder	0.3578	0.3596	
IT Lira	0.4143	0.4164	

Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- Kind of saxophone
- Old saying
- Honcho
- Twosome
- Result of sorrow
- Utter
- Love of one's life
- Pro's opposite
- Enriched
- More than weird
- Office holders
- Brummell or Geste
- Rejects
- Humphrey Bogart role
- Jazz pianist
- Impudent
- Half a bikini?
- Sings at the station?
- By that much
- Evening in Paris
- Start for corn or form
- Calendar word
- Con man
- Iron
- Remains for a while
- Stuck in —
- Antique auto
- Hand warmer
- To-dos
- A Brady
- Wood's iron
- Grain disease
- Fictional villain
- Paradise
- Raises
- Point of a rock

DOWN

- Church recess
- Fine linen fabric
- Even
- Cooly
- Parthenon's location
- Exploits
- Driving club, for short
- Canine sound
- Appreciates
- Endure
- Front of the bus?
- Locale
- Ado
- Minnesota —
- Street
- Swiss city
- Expression of disgust
- Upright
- Before a certain time
- Judicata
- Title of respect
- Agitated
- Sturdy fabric
- Some peers
- Show off
- That lady
- Land measure
- Take booty
- off (renounced)
- Put on weight
- Stations
- Grapevine item
- Leo's pride?
- Footnote abbr.
- Melody
- Pertaining to a poem
- Not quite closed
- Baltic port
- Pollution problem
- Wrath
- Eastern title of honor

by Mary Dorderian Brown

IN	RE	LIPS	SEEP
DEER	OSHA	CAPRI	
EXPERIMENTATION			
STR	ASSN	ABIDED	
OTT	ODD	NEMO	
WADI	LIMA	MGM	
ABOUT	OPENER	III	
RECOMMENDATIONS			
ELI	DECALS	ALTO	
BAS	ALEE	GOON	
AMIR	SCI	BOG	
LILLIES	SAME	ISO	
EXISTENTIALISTS			
SETTO	RIDS	RITES	
DYAN	ACES	ASTA	

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HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JULY 6, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson
Astrologer, Carroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) If you have a new financial plan in mind today, consult with an expert before you put it in motion. Avoid getting into any disagreement, but this, especially with your loved ones or you could regret the situation.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You should do any acquaintance have consistently lie down when you are dependent on them; however, be grateful to the who are loyal. Later evening will be good seeing close friends.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A private concern which has been hindering your progress at this time can be handled quite easily. You should not rush around when travelling or you are liable to miss out on some very interesting experiences.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You should not allow yourself to become involved today in a disagreement between your mate and a friend otherwise you may have to take sides and disappoint someone. Don't make assumptions which prove out to be incorrect.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Decisions you make today will be rather far-reaching in their implications, so be sure you make only wise ones. You should not rely entirely upon your intuition, however, with some deductive reasoning you can get the answers.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You would be wise today to focus your attention on family matters, so plan something you can all do together later this evening, which can be interesting. This is a good time to discuss a new project with fellow associates.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A thoughtful attitude with your mate today could bring about a bad quarrel, as this person has been feeling some what neglected. Later this evening would be a good time to seek out knowledgeable people for advice.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A fellow business acquaintance is just as stubborn as you are, so rather than disagreeing, try to reach a compromise which can be quite beneficial. Drive with the utmost care while on the highway and avoid any difficulties.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have committed yourself today to some career activities which are boring, however, get it completed, yet since they will pay off handsomely in the days ahead. Later this evening you can go out with your mate.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If you go out for some recreational activities today, be sure to stay well within your budget, thereby you won't be short of funds. Try to help a good friend out of a bad situation and he or she will be quite grateful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You should avoid doing anything today which will destroy the harmony of your loved ones within your home. It would be wise to stay around people later this evening with a sense of humor, thereby making things enjoyable.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Wash your face and do not let you say and do with anything with others today and avoid "hunting" for feelings. Use motion of any kind, especially while driving on the highway today, avoiding any difficulties.

Birthstone of July: Pearl
— Ruby

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Various small advertisements and notices on the right margin, including "Arab Electrical", "Cement company", "THE BETTER HALF", "JUMBLE", "DEGOS", "DAHYN", "TABBIR", "NWWON", and "A COW".

Gold prices melt below 11-year low

LONDON (AFP) — Gold prices have melted to their lowest point since December 1985 after the Australian central bank said that it had sold off two-thirds of its strategic reserves.

Prices plummeted to \$323 per ounce (of 31.103 grammes) at the start of trade on the London bullion market,

which was almost \$10 lower than the opening price.

The Reserve Bank of Australia said Friday that it had sold a massive 167 tonnes of its 247 tonnes of gold holdings in the past six months, for an estimated price of 2.4 billion Australian dollars (\$1.8 billion).

The London-based

trading house, GNI, said that the announcement came as "further confirmation that central banks no longer feel that gold has a significant role to play in their reserves ... and now not just the Dutch and Belgian, but the rest of the world too."

At the Merrill Lynch trading house, precious metals analyst Ted Arnold said that "we will see much more mobilisation of reserves by central banks over the next 24 months."

In June, the market was severely affected by rumours that the Belgian government was seeking to offload some of its reserves.

The quantity of gold mentioned by the Belgian authorities was relatively insignificant set

against the total volume of daily trade on the bullion market. The government said that it planned to sell just 26 tonnes of gold per year from 1999 onwards.

However, the market was concerned that the plan may represent a shift in asset holdings at European central banks, which are seeking to offload gold reserves in favour of currency.

In early 1997, the market was cast into turmoil by an announcement from the Dutch central bank that it had sold 300 tonnes of gold from its reserves in 1996.

A decision by the Swiss parliament to allow the Swiss National Bank to manage its own gold reserves and to generate profits by lending it

added to market fears of meltdown on the gold market.

In its annual 1996 review, Gold Fields Minerals Services (GFMS) said low investor interest and increased supply in the gold market, notably from the official sector wreaked havoc with gold prices last year.

"The price weakness since the last quarter of 1996 has been to a large extent the result of poor sentiment, stemming above all from fears about the future impact of the official sector on the gold market," Stewart Murray, one of the authors of the report said.

Nonetheless, average prices on the London market were one per cent higher than in 1995, at \$387.87 per ounce over

the year as a whole.

GFMS identified considerable "volatility" on the market, following two large-scale official gold sales, which accounted for 500 tonnes of metal.

Both the central banks of Belgium — in the first quarter of 1996 — and the Netherlands — in the last quarter — sold large quantities of gold.

"But perhaps just as important was the fear of further official mobilisations," GFMS said. The gold specialist said that discussions at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to sell some of its gold to fund debt relief to impoverished countries and a plan by the Swiss National Bank to fund a humanitarian foundation through limit-

ed gold sales weighed heavily on market sentiment.

However, fears of a flood of gold from the official sector failed to materialise as other central banks stepped up gold purchases. GFMS noted that net bank sales for 1996 were just 239 tonnes.

"Official sector activity in the gold market is not a one-way street," Mr. Murray said.

Mine production increased by 5.4 per cent to 2,346 tonnes in 1996, despite reduced output in the leading producer countries of South Africa and Russia. Production in the world's number one producing country, South Africa, fell below 500 tonnes for the first time since 1956.

This was offset by record output in Asia, Australia and the Americas, GFMS said.

A surge in gold prices in the first quarter of 1996 unleashed a record glut of scrap metal on to the market.

Jewellers, who form the backbone of demand for physical gold, increased consumption by 1.4 per cent to a record 2,807 tonnes.

Demand was particularly strong in India, where use grew by seven per cent, and in the Middle East, which showed a nine per cent increase. In contrast, Chinese demand fell from 200 tonnes to 184 tonnes.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Arab Electrical Industries Company turns to other markets to compensate loss of sales to Iraq

** TO COMPENSATE the loss of sales to the Iraqi market, described by the Arab Electrical Industries Company as being one of the basic markets for exports, the firm resorted to open alternate new markets. As such, the company was relatively successful to enter the markets of Lebanon, Sudan, Egypt and Bosnia in addition to very limited quantities of sales in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Malta, the United Arab Emirates and Cyprus. "Efforts are still continuing to raise outside sales and to expand the new markets to include those of Eritrea and Libya, board Chairman Mohammed Qaisi told the general assembly.

Mr. Qaisi told the shareholders that Israeli barriers remain an obstacle to achieve the ambition of commercial exchange between Jordan and the self-rule Palestinian territories. However, the chairman said that the company's sales section is fully aware of the details of marketing in that area and has conducted a deep study on the Palestinian market in preparation for the implementation stage once the general circumstances allow that.

Exports accounted for 41.2 per cent of the company's 1996 sales which amounted to JD705,497. Local sales, accounting for the remaining 58.8 per cent, totalled JD1.01 million. The output last year of electrical accessories and ancillary equipment, such as switches, sockets, plugs, extension reels, wires and cables, miniature circuit breakers and distribution boards, were only about 35 per cent of production capacity.

According to the annual report, the company's current assets and current liabilities at the end of 1996 were JD3.39 million and JD1.23 million respectively. As such, the working capital amounted to JD2.16 million. Total fixed assets after depreciation stood at JD3.64 million and shareholders' equity totalled JD6.23 million.

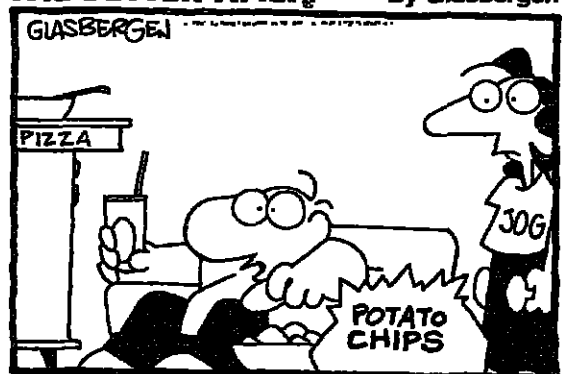
The company's future strategy according to Mr. Qaisi is to continue focusing on the branch in Egypt due to its strategic importance and direct reflection on the company's general situation (Al Aswaj).

Cement company boosts exports by 30 per cent, Tabbaa says

** ACCORDING TO Board Chairman Hamdi Tabbaa, the Jordan Cement Factories Company boosted exports by 30 per cent during the first six months of this year. He said exports reached nearly 500,000 tonnes. Mr. Tabbaa indicated that cement shipments to Syria have started at the rate of about 6,000 tonnes daily and that such shipments will continue until the end of September when total sales are expected to fulfil the contracted amount of 200,000 tonnes.

Mr. Tabbaa said contacts will be made with Egypt to export Jordanian cement to that country and to work on lowering customs on it (Al Dustour).

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"Why diet? As soon as I lose fifty pounds and lower my cholesterol, some expert will decide that fat is good!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OEGOS

DAHYN

TABBIR

NIWWON

Answer: OEGOS, DAHYN, TABBIR, NIWWON

Yesterday's Jumbles: FETCH HEDGE KOSHER NICETY

Answer: What happened to the low truck operator in church? — HE GOT HITCHED

Kuwaiti investors to set up \$130m firm

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A group of Kuwaiti banks and other investors are setting up a firm with capital of \$130 million to target investments in Gulf utilities and the downstream oil sector, a founder has said.

A private placement has raised capital of 40 million dinars (\$130 million) for the Bubiyan Investment Company, registered in Kuwait, said Faisal Ali Al Mutawa, a founding shareholder.

The central bank approved the plan and final documentation is being completed ahead of the first general assembly "within weeks," said Mr. Mutawa, managing director of a top local trading firm.

The company's main objective is "to participate in the privatisation of utilities in Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), as well as the downstream oil sector," Mr. Mutawa told AFP.

But initially the funds will mainly be invested in domestic and international capital markets, said Mr. Mutawa, who is also a board member

of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Kuwait's parliament is considering a law which paves the way for selling public utilities, including power, water and telecommunications, while other utilities in the region are increasingly turning to private capital.

Mr. Mutawa said the Kuwait sell-offs could take place in the next one or two years, which will give the new firm a chance to position itself.

As well as utilities, Mr. Mutawa said the new firm is targeting particularly petrochemical projects in the six GCC states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The new firm will be listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange within three years of being founded, he added.

The founding shareholders include two local banks, Gulf Bank and Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, as well as other financial institutions and wealthy individuals.


Saudi prince to build Four Seasons Hotel in Egypt

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia's billionaire Prince Al-Waleed Bin Talal said Tuesday he was building a \$65 million Four Seasons Hotel in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm El Sheikh.

A statement from the prince's office in Riyadh said he and Egyptian businessman Hisham Talaat Moustafa "signed an agreement to build a Four Seasons Hotel in Sharm El-Sheikh on the Red Sea. The total project cost is \$65 million."

It did not say when construction of the 140-room hotel would begin. It said the hotel would also have 112 chalets and 34 luxurious villas. The hotel is the third investment this year for the Saudi prince in Egypt where he is building a Four Seasons Hotel in Cairo and has launched an agricultural company.

Four Seasons Hotels Inc sold a 25 per cent stake in the company and interest in some hotels to the prince in 1995.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET												
HOLDINGS BANK CHARTERED ACCOUNTS - JORDANIAN												
TELEPHONE: 60711 / 60713												
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 05/07/1997												
PAST 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE			
HIGH	LOW			TRANS.	SHARES	JD	PRICE	PRICE	PP.100			
269.000	213.000	ARAB BANK	12.1	1.52	26	420	164.300	242.50	264.00	0.50		
1.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	E	0.30	37	22311	46791	2.10	2.20	0.20		
2.480	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.4	7.45	8	2500	5655	2.25	2.25	0.01		
4.180	2.440	JOR. KUNAIF BANK	11.0	0.00	18	13375	43225	2.25	2.25	0.01		
4.050	2.780	JOR. GULF BANK	5.2	8.05	11	7250	6340	1.87	1.87	0.01		
4.050	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.5	3.16	40	10844	41603	3.75	3.50	0.25		
3.800	3.000	JOR. INV. FID. BANK	19.9	0.00	3	220	684	1.13	1.10	0.03		
2.460	1.000	BEIT AL-MAL (BEITKA)	7	13.16	6	1600	1859	1.16	1.14	0.02		
1.460	1.020	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	9	3900	3993	2.03	2.04	0.01		
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 201.14 CHNG: 0.00	
2.350	1.600	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	4.7	12.05	1	250	215	1.86	1.86	0.00		
3.010	1.990	JORDAN GULF INSUR.	0	0.00	2	1250	2785	2.21	2.22	0.01		
2.550	2.180	ARAB UNI. INTL. INSUR.	8.7	4.59	1	2000	4260	2.18	2.19	0.01		
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 114.52 CHNG: +0.31	
1.820	1.460	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.0	6.02	15	6713	11261	1.67	1.66	0.01		
1.540	1.320	JORD. ELECTRICITY	8.2	8.13	5	1800	2072	1.28	1.28	0.00		
2.650	2.090	SHIPPING LINES	15.4	4.91	4	9500	25440	2.61	2.65	0.04		
1.380	0.930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	66	30687	40659	1.34	1.35	0.01		
1.910	1.170	MID. EAST HOTELS	19.0	0.00	3	1000	3770	1.75	1.75	0.00		
3.720	2.890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	7.7	0.00	3	1500	4295	2.92	2.94	0.02		
2.230	1.630	UNIFIED CO.	8.0	5.51	1	1000	1650	1.71	1.69	0.02		
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 108.92 CHNG: +0.23	
4.450	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	27.4	2.70	39	170450	69475	4.07	4.07	0.00		
4.340	2.710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	11.2	2.48	5	50000	202000	4.00	4.04	0.04		
10.250	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.5	9.07	6	715	6675	9.75	9.80	0.05		
3.260	1.650	INDUSTRIAL COMM. ACQ.	9	0.00	2	1500	1034	1.88	1.88	0.00		
3.010	1.010	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	11.1	4.98	54	14394	58627	4.01	4.02	0.01		
2.570	2.050	JORDAN DAIRY	8.1	10.19	2	200	516	2.36	2.40	0.04		
1.820	1.370	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	16.7	5.93	2	500	675	1.37	1.35	0.02		
10.250	6.800	ARAB CHEM. DRYING	19.8	4.64	1	100	645	6.80	6.86	0.06		
5.650	4.250	DAR ALDANA DV. INV.	13.2	4.66	3	300	1620	5.45	5.37	0.08		
3.850	2.710	ARAB ALUM. IND.	6.2	9.43	7	2900	7735	2.71	2.65	0.06		
1.950	0.950	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.9	0.00	17	17650	8216	4.6	4.7	0.01		
1.520	0.980	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	2	500	480	0.98	0.96	0.02		
0.770	0.520	NATIONAL INDS.	9	0.00	2	750	390	0.52	0.52	0.00		
1.330	0.570	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEN.	9	0.00	19	13650	7662	0.58	0.55	0.03		
0.950	0.550	JOR. SULPHO-CHEN.	9	0.00	4	2700	1511	0.59	0.57	0.02		
1.670	1.120	ARAB PHARM. CHEN.	17.6	5.07	11	2950	4948	1.41	1.38	0.03		
2.080	1.200	UNIV. MOON INDS.	9	0.21	21	4050	5085	1.27	1.25	0.02		
1.510	1.090	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	14.8	9.09	1	200	210	1.10	1.10	0.00		
1.600	1.300	NATL. CHLORINE	14.1	4.57	7	3142	4637	1.48	1.52	0.02		
1.090	0.830	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.4	0.00	3	1000	860	0.86	0.81	0.02		
2.090	1.420	EL. CAT. READY WEAR	51.7	0.00	8	200	2	0.00	0.00	0.00		
1.330	1.080	NATL. TOBACCO	6.0	0.00	8	1250	2470	2.10	2.10	0.00		
1.260	0.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	29.6	0.00	5	8950	7792	0.87	0.87	0.00		
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											INDEX: 127.79 CHNG: +0.03	
GRAND TOTAL											INDEX: 161.70 CHNG: +0.03	
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 05/07/1997												
0.640	0.350	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	2	1500	555	0.37	0.37	0.00		
0.670	0.410	JOR. TRADE FAC.	12.3	0.00	3	600	730	0.46	0.46	0.00		
1.950	1.100	SARA FOR INVESTMENT	45.5	0.00	1	4500	4995	1.11	1.11	0.00		
0.840	0.560	UNION INV. SOS	9	0.00	1	1500	477	0.57	0.60	0.01		
0.660	0.370	ARAB FIM. INVEST.	9	0.00	22	23000	10555	0.48	0.47	0.01		
0.950	0.720	AL-SHAQI INV. 75%	9	0.00	3	20300	10640	0.78	0.78	0.00		
0.950	0.680	AL-SHAQI INV. 75%	61.4	0.00	5	11000	4180	0.63	0.64	0.01		
0.490	0.200	JOR. INDS. MATCH-JAMICO	9	0.00	12	20530	5378	0.25	0.26	0.01		
0.780	0.400	NATL. MULT. GEN. MANICO	9	0.00	36	72500	40445	0.57	0.54	0.03		
0.710	0.580	JORDAN STEEL	33.5	6.76	10	17600	1285	0.58	0.74	0.01		
0.580	0.430	ARAB ELECT. INDS.	9	0.00	3	2872	1436	0.50	0.50	0.00		
0.710	0.600	MIDESTAT PHARM. 75%	9	0.00	2	1000	370	0.62	0.62	0.00		
0.220	0.840	UNION TOBACCO 75%	9	0.00	3	570	570	0.89	0.90	0.01		
0.680	0.580	RAZI PHARM. 85%	9	0.00	4	2582	1058	0.56	0.56	0.00		
0.600	0.360	INDS. ENG.	22.8	0.00	8	12980	12781	0.37	0.37	0.00		
0.760	0.680	EMBS. CHEMATIC	29.0	0.00	2	900	680	0.68	0.68	0.00		
1.000	0.780	KAT. ALUMINIUM. 75%	9	0.00	24	14350	7618	0.79	0.78	0.01		
0.870	0.530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.8	15.87	19	26750	16968	0.64	0.63	0.01		
GRAND TOTAL											160 253124 131231	
* New 12 months high												
* New 12 months low												
* Listed during the past 12 months												
* % Change is 100 or more												
* Negative P/E												
* Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year												

Cash-strapped sports federations await sponsorship for Pan-Arab Games Jordan's delegation still not finalised with 6 days remaining

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — As the Kingdom's national teams prepare to take part in the 8th Pan-Arab Games which start in Beirut, Lebanon, July 12-27, the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) Saturday announced that it had only received the participation fees of three out of 13 federations taking part in the largest gathering of Arab youth since the event was last held in Syria in 1992.

JOC Technical Committee Chairman Sari Hamdan said each federation was asked to pay 40 per cent of expenses incurred by the Ministry of Youth — something most federations might not be able to do since it would cost them half of their allocated budget for the season in case of team sports.

Participation in the event is expected to cost around JD 92,000. In order to cut down on cost, each team will arrive in Beirut one day prior to its event and leave following the end of their respective competitions.

While less than a week remains for the opening of the games and as the JOC tries to overcome the financial hurdle of the event, the Kingdom's delegation is still not finalised with the addition Saturday of 12 persons to the karate delegation.

Other team managers and officials were also being added to the delegation which will meet with the minister of youth July 7.

The delay in finalising the delegation until now and the uncertainty surrounding the athletes and games Jordan is slated to take part in has been criticised by sports officials citing it as a main point hindering serious

preparation and displaying a lax attitude towards the event.

The JOC had asked federations to name the most promising athletes and teams with a chance of attaining at least a halfway standing in their respective sports as a minimum criteria to qualify for participation. Compared to the preliminary list, the Kingdom's delegation was downsize to 182. Eighty-nine men and 32 women athletes will be competing in 13 of the 21 events at the Games. The delegation will also include 61 team managers, coaches and officials.

The latest list cuts down the number of athletes and referees in some sports and excludes four games as Jordan had previously announced it would be competing in 17 events.

The preliminary list of the 257-member delegation had included 130 men and 37 women athletes, 64 officials and coaches, and 26 referees.

Twenty countries have confirmed participation in the event and only Somalia and the Comoros Islands will not be competing.

Twenty-one events have been set for the Games excluding handball, gymnastics, body-building, hockey, diving and water polo for technical and financial reasons.

Jordan dropped participation in fencing, cycling, tennis and volleyball, and the entry form now includes participation in athletics, basketball, karate, swimming, taekwondo, table tennis, boxing, equestrian, soccer, weightlifting, judo, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling and shooting. Other events at the Games include golf, yachting and kick-boxing.

Jordan's soccer and basketball

teams will be representing the country in the opening ceremony July 12. The soccer team is now in Istanbul for a week-long training camp where they have met the youth team of Turkish champions Galatasaray and drew 2-2. They will next meet Istanbulspor Tuesday before returning to Amman.

The JOC is now following up the Kingdom's players who are undergoing medical tests which have been set as a main criteria for participation in order to rule out any possible injury.

Some check-ups showed that a few athletes had injuries that would bar them from successfully competing and therefore some events and athletes are expected to be possibly ruled out of competition.

Basketball is scheduled to be the only team sport Jordan's women will take part in. Individual sports are athletics, swimming, taekwondo, equestrian and table tennis.

Although the Kingdom's women's basketball team was unimpressive in friendly matches against Syria last week, women's basketball was given the go-ahead by Minister of Youth and Sports Qasem Abu Ein who prompted the JOC to maintain continuity for the women's game which had been non-existent from 1983-1995 when the team was regrouped and took part in the Asian Championship.

Five teams — Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Syria — will contest the women's basketball event at the Games.

The men's team, runner-up in the last Pan-Arab Games, did not fare any better against Syria and won only one out of three matches.

Both teams are now undergoing a tough training regimen and the women's team has been boosted with the arrival from the U.S. of Jumana Salti who was a key player and scorer in the team and was chosen among the top players of the 1995 Asian championship.

According to latest reports, the biggest contingent will be that of hosts Lebanon with 563, followed by Syria 359 and Egypt 343. Lebanese officials last month announced that the main sports city cost \$72 million adding that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had helped in financing the project while pledges from other Arab countries had not been received.

Jordanian sports officials announced their full support of the event noting the importance of taking part in the games which have only been held seven times since 1953.

Jordan has received preliminary approval to host the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 1999 following a meeting of the ministerial committee of the Arab Ministers of Sports, the Arab League and the Arab Sports Federation last March.

Jordan had finished 9th overall in the last Pan-Arab Games with 1 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals.

Hosts Syria topped the medals table with 48 points, 31 silver, 37 bronze followed by Egypt and Algeria.

The event was due to be held last year but was postponed after the Israeli bombardment of southern Lebanon.

The Pan-Arab Games were held in Alexandria 1953, Beirut 1957, Casablanca 1961, Cairo 1965, Damascus 1976, Morocco 1985 and Damascus 1992.

Hingis rewrites history books

WIMBLEDON (AP) — Jana Novotna again couldn't hold a lead in the Wimbledon final and Martina Hingis rallied to win in three sets Saturday to become the youngest champion this century.

Novotna was up a break at 2-0 in the third set, with a game point for 3-0, but couldn't convert. Hingis ran off six of the next seven games to complete a 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 victory for her second Grand Slam singles title. At 16 years and 9 months, the Swiss sensation became the youngest Wimbledon singles champion — man or woman — since Charlotte "Lottie" Dod won in 1887 at 15 years, 10 months.

It was another heartbreaking Wimbledon final for Novotna, who blew a 4-1 lead in the third set against Steffi Graf in 1993 and wept on the shoulder of the Duchess of Kent.

It wasn't as dramatic this time, but Novotna still failed to sustain a lead when she was in a position to win. There were no tears this time when she received the runner-up platter from the duchess.

The two spoke intimately for more than 30 seconds, and then Novotna appeared to hold back tears as she held up the platter to the crowd.

The duchess spoke very briefly in congratulating Hingis, who took the larger winner's platter and gleamed as she raised the trophy aloft.

Novotna may not have been at full strength. She called out a trainer several times during changeovers during the third set. She took some pills and applied an ice pack to her stomach, but there was no visible sign that she was injured.

Novotna playfully grabbed the winner's platter from Hingis. She held it up to the crowd before returning it to Hingis, who clutched it tightly to her chest as if to say, "no, it's mine."

Novotna, playing perfect grass-court tennis, won the first set in just 22 minutes as Hingis struggled to keep up with her chip-and-



Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic (R) jokingly holds onto the Challenge Trophy held by Ladies' Singles final winner Martina Hingis of Switzerland at the Wimbledon tennis championships July 5. Hingis won the final 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 (Reuters photo)

charge tactics. Novotna opened the match by breaking Hingis at love and raced to a 4-0 lead after just 11 minutes, dropping only five points in the process.

Hingis finally held in the fifth game, and again in the seventh. But Novotna served out the set at 15, closing it out with a serve and backhand volley.

The shot which seemed to turn things around for Hingis came in the third game of the second set. With Hingis serving at game point, Novotna chipped a forehand return deep into the backhand corner. But Hingis shuffled over and hit a stretch backhand passing shot down the line and out of Novotna's reach.

That seemed to revive Hingis. She suddenly found the range and timing on her shots. Her passing shots and lobs started clicking, keeping Novotna off balance. Hingis broke for the first time to go up 4-2. After Novotna blew a game point by sailing an easy forehand volley long, Hingis clinched the break by whipping a stretch forehand passing shot down the line.

Hingis served for the set at 5-2 in the tightest game

of the match. She went up 40-0 but couldn't convert, saving three break points and needing five set points before finally closing it out with a perfectly-placed forehand lob off a weak Novotna approach.

Novotna saved four break points in the first game of the final set. The Czech, who had pulled out of the women's doubles the previous day citing a sore thigh, called for a trainer for the first time during the changeover.

Novotna broke in the next game to go up 2-0, with Hingis bouncing her racket on the turf in frustration. The match turned for good in the next game as Novotna reached game point at 40-30 on her serve, one point away from a 3-0 lead.

But after Novotna volleyed cross court, Hingis ran it down and ripped a backhand pass. Hingis got to break point with another backhand pass, then completed the break with a strong reaction forehand volley that flew past Novotna to make it 2-1. Novotna again called for the trainer, who gave her some pills and an ice pack.

Hingis won five straight games, breaking again to

go up 5-2 but failing to serve out the match in the next game. But Hingis broke Novotna again in the eighth game, converting her second match point with a forehand cross-court pass.

After the first set, Hingis found the way to blunt Novotna's net-charging tactics. She finished with 18 passing shot winners, all but one coming in the last two sets.

Hingis had 14 forehand and 18 backhand winners, while Novotna had only four forehand winners and no backhand winners. Novotna also committed all four of her double faults in the third set.

Hingis was already the youngest grand slam champion this century, having won the Australian Open in January at the age of 16 years, 3 months. She was also the youngest-ever Wimbledon champion when she won the 1996 doubles title with Helena Sukova at 15 years, 282 days.

The previous youngest Wimbledon women's singles champ this century was Maureen Connolly, who was 17 years, 9 months, when she won the 1952 championship.

Pioline ready to ignore the odds; Sampras seeks 4th title

LONDON (AFP) — Success was a long-time coming for Frenchman Cedric Pioline — and one of his chief stumbling blocks was Pete Sampras.

But on Sunday the 28-year-old player from Neuilly close to Paris will get the chance to score a first victory after seven losses against the world number-one when they meet for the richest prize in tennis in the Wimbledon singles final.

Pioline, who was beaten by Sampras in straight-sets in the 1993 U.S. Open final and who has won only three sets in the seven showdowns with the American, said: "I know what it is like to lose in a Grand Slam final. Now I would like to know what it is like to win one."

The French player, who dismissed the 1991 champion Michael Stich in a five-set centre-court thriller late Friday, began to think he was destined never to win a tournament when he lost nine consecutive finals (three of them to Sampras) between 1992 and 1996. Then, last year, he finally killed off the "runner-up" label when he notched up a first ATP success in Copenhagen.

This year he has added a second title to his record at Prague, and on Sunday Pioline is determined to prove that he is "a winner."

"My game is more mature — I am more mature," said Pioline who still smarts at the memory of his first Grand Slam final.

"When I played Pete in the final at the U.S. Open everything happened so fast and I didn't realise what I was doing. This time it will be different."



Cedric Pioline

"To beat him I think I just have to play my game — like I did against Stich — and enjoy it. "Pete's not a machine. He can miss shots. He can have doubts. And if it gets close..."

Pioline, who has slumped to 44th in the rankings after being the number nine in 1994, is coached by Pier

Cherret and is married to Mireille Bercot and has a four-year-old son Andrea.

His parents are "not tennis at all." They met at a volleyball tournament when his mother was playing for Romania's world championship team and his father was a member of the Racing Club de France.

Pioline is the first Frenchman to reach the final since the towering Yvon Petra, who played in long trousers, won the title in 1946.

He is also only the eleventh unseeded finalist in the history of the championships. The odds, however, appear stacked against him for Sunday since only one unseeded player has ever won Wimbledon — Boris Becker back in 1985. Pete Sampras has a phenomenal record at Wimbledon having won all but two of 38 matches at the All England Club since 1992. The 25-year-old American, who won the title here in 1993, 1994 and 1995, has already won nine Grand Slam titles in his career — and a success on Sunday will enable him to match the record of compatriot Bill Tilden. Only three players will have won more major tournaments —

Bjorn Borg of Sweden and Australian Rod Laver with 11 each, and Australian Roy Emerson with 12.

Sampras got off to a tremendous start to the season by winning his first 17 matches and scoring a second Australian Open triumph, but then slumped in form in the run-up to Wimbledon, winning only four matches in as many tournaments.

But his remarkable run through the draw over the past two weeks in which he has dropped just three sets in six victories, has silenced the doubters.

And he was so impressive in his 6-2, 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) semi-final win against the world's top doubles player — Todd Woodbridge, that the Australian joked that he would have needed his partner Mark Woodforde

on court with him to make a game of it.

Sampras himself admitted ominously: "I don't remember a Wimbledon that I've served as well as I have this year. I'm very motivated and ready for Sunday."

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Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People
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TERMS OF REFERENCE OF PROJECT MANAGER
Tourism Development in the West Bank and Gaza
PAL/96/005

In the framework of its support programme for the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the UNDP/PAPP is launching phase II of its technical assistance project to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA). The incumbent will:

1. Supervise, manage and monitor the activities and administration of the project, and ensure proper implementation of all its components, namely: Tourism Planning and Development, Tourism Marketing, Institutional and Human Capacity Building, Tourism Awareness.
2. Coordinate the relationship between the MOTA, the UNDP/PAPP and other involved institutions.
3. Coordinate, supervise and assist the activities of short term consultants.
4. Review the activities of those public and private sector organizations involved either directly or indirectly with tourism, and recommend measures to improve the overall levels of coordination, cooperation in the sector.

The Project Manager should have a degree in Science or Arts in the fields of Tourism Development and Management, and 6 to 10 years of work experience in a related field. Work experience with local Palestinian institutions and understanding of the institutional set-up of the Palestinian Authority would be a strong advantage. The Project Manager should have good and proven management skills. Proficiency in using computer for word-processing, and fluency in Arabic and English are required. Interested candidates should send their CV to the following address:

UNDP/PAPP, 4A, Ya'Kobi St., P.O. Box: 51359, Jerusalem.
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